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**A Project for Tourism Development
in the Serra Gaúcha**

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**A Project for Tourism Development
in the Serra Gaúcha**

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Dedication

To my family, for giving me the travel bug.

*

The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can,
Pursuing it with eager feet,
Until it joins some larger way
Where many paths and errands meet.
And whither then? I cannot say.

– J. R. R. Tolkien

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Abstract

A Project for Tourism Development in the Serra Gaúcha

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

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In 2004, the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism launched the Tourism Regionalization Program (Roteiros do Brasil), which presented new prospects for Brazilian tourism through decentralized management. One of the goals of this program was to disperse Brazil's tourism supply, predominantly located along the coast, and bring tourism to the interior of the country. Brazil's formal recognition of the need for diversification of its tourist destinations was a positive step toward the development of a thriving Brazilian tourism market, but in the global tourism market, Brazil continues to be associated with a limited number of stereotypical attractions. Despite the advances achieved by the Tourism Regionalization Program, tourism remains geographically concentrated in cities such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. This research serves as an analysis of the lesser-known tourism market in the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Through the use of fundamental qualitative research methods, namely semi-structure interviews and questionnaires completed by students and professionals involved with tourism—both in the Serra Gaúcha as well as outside of Brazil—I assess the current state of tourism to

the region in order to formulate key recommendations for the development and improvement of the industry there. From the results, I conclude that the tourism boards of the municipalities throughout the Serra Gaúcha should join together to function regionally in order to more effectively market themselves as a desirable tourist destination and to compete on a national scale for tourists' attention. In light of the magnified attention Brazil is enjoying due to its selection as the host for both the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics, now is an optimal time for competitive touristic regions, such as the Serra Gaúcha, throughout Brazil to actively build their brand and pursue tourism development strategies tailored to their unique regional strengths and weaknesses.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Early in January 2013, *The New York Times* published an article called “The 46 Places to Go in 2013,” and at the very top of the list was Rio de Janeiro with the tagline: “Because the whole world will be there in 2014” (*The New York Times* 2013). This article was, and is, only one in a continuous wave of travel-centered publications singing the praises of mega-tourist attractions such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in connection with the upcoming 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics, with little-to-no mention of other Brazilian destinations.

Though understandable from a media standpoint, the myopic focus signals a bigger issue concerning the Brazilian tourism industry. Brazil is the largest country in both South America and the Latin America region—the world's fifth largest country, both by geographical area and by population, with over 193 million people (IGBE 2011). It is the largest Lusophone country in the world (the only one in the Americas), and it borders all other South American countries except Ecuador and Chile. Its population is ethnically diverse and includes not only Portuguese and African descendants, but also thriving immigrant populations from Germany, Italy, and Japan. São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro no more comprise the entirety of what Brazil has to offer than Los Angeles and New York City do for the United States, and, yet, somehow all the international community can seem to remember about the thousands of tourist attractions throughout the massive, diverse country is the beaches of Rio de Janeiro, the overwhelming cityscape of São Paulo, Carnival, and supermodels in bikinis.

DECENTRALIZATION, DIVERSIFICATION, AND REGIONALIZATION

In April 2004, the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism—founded only a year earlier in 2003—launched the Tourism Regionalization Program, entitled *Roteiros do Brasil*, presenting new prospects for Brazilian tourism through decentralized management, structured around the principles of flexibility, coordination, and mobilization. One of the goals of this program was to disperse Brazil's tourism supply, predominantly located along the coast, and bring tourism to the interior of the country. This regionalization aimed to increase specific actions focused on municipal units, as presented in the 2004 Regionalization Map, composed of 219 tourist regions, including 3,203 municipalities. The *Roteiros do Brasil* Tourism Fair was created by the Ministry of Tourism as a strategy to stimulate regionalization actions, and the first edition of the event, held in 2005, presented 451 tours covering 959 municipalities in 134 tourist regions. In its second edition, the Fair was confirmed as a milestone for the development of tourism in Brazil. The results described in the following figure are a new benchmark for the expansion of tourism, opening up prospects for social and economic development in all the country's regions (Figure 1) (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, 67).



Figure 1: Process of Regionalization and Itineraries of the Tourism Regionalization Program (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010)

The Tourism Regionalization Program mapped out 200 tourist regions in the country through the joint efforts of State Tourism Bodies and Forums, and selected the itineraries and regions capable of being developed to international quality standards. In order to prioritize destinations along the 87 selected itineraries, passing through 116 Brazilian tourist regions, the Ministry considered evaluations and values attributed by the International Tourism Marketing Plan (Aquarela Plan 2020), the Domestic Tourism Marketing Plan (Cores do Brasil), and other studies and surveys of federal investments and potentials of these destinations. Based on the results, 65 tourist destinations were picked to induce development along the respective itineraries and tourist regions, in all of Brazil's 27 States. The hope was that strategic investment in these 65 key destinations to bring them up to international quality standards by 2010 would encourage them to serve as models for tourism development in the surrounding areas.

The decentralized management approach to tourism in Brazil permitted states and local municipalities to promote and develop their tourism market in a way befitting their specific strengths and attractions. Evidence and common sense, however, suggest that even though the 2007-2010 National Tourism Plan advised that an "integrated management environment" be "extended to the tourism authorities in the tourist regions and municipalities, in order to reach all tourist destinations in the country" and warned that, in order to be effective, decentralized management should be "coupled with monitoring and evaluation of tourism policies and plans and of their impacts throughout the country, adding and incorporating the contribution of each region," many of Brazil's smaller, secondary cities have not been given nearly as much attention as those big-city destinations monopolizing all of the spotlight and revenue (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, 39). Brazil's formal recognition of the need for diversification of its tourist destinations was a positive step toward the development of a thriving Brazilian tourism

market, but in the eyes of the global market Brazil continues to be associated with a limited number of stereotypical attractions. Despite the advances achieved by the Tourism Regionalization Program, tourism remains very concentrated in geographic terms. Decentralization must continue to expand towards the interior of Brazil, together with quality standards that can be adjusted to regional diversities, while keeping them competitive on an international scale (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, 39).

With these goals in mind, this thesis seeks to serve as market research and analysis of the Serra Gaúcha region in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. This region was chosen specifically because of its existing touristic appeal and ability to compete for the attention of international tourists. Of the 65 “Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Regional,” the three located in Brazil’s southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul are: Porto Alegre, Bento Gonçalves, and Gramado (Índice de Competitividade do Turismo Nacional). Of these, only Porto Alegre, the capital of the state, is not in the Serra Gaúcha, suggesting that the federal government found the region to be the most competitive in the state with respect to tourism. This should not come as a surprise to those who have visited the region and witnessed its unique and decidedly non-stereotypical Brazilian characteristics.

MACRORREGIÃO NORTE

Nº	UF	Destino Indutor
1	AC	Rio Branco
2	AM	Barcelos
3		Manaus
4		Parintins
5	AP	Macapá
6	PA	Belém
7		Santarém
8	RO	Porto Velho
9	RR	Boa Vista
10	TO	Mateiros
11		Palmas

MACRORREGIÃO NORDESTE

Nº	UF	Destino Indutor
12	AL	Maceió
13		Maragogi
14	BA	Lençóis
15		Maraú
16		Mata de São João
17		Porto Seguro
18		Salvador
19	CE	Aracati
20		Fortaleza
21		Jijoca de Jericoacoara
22		Nova Olinda
23	MA	Barreirinhas
24		São Luís
25	PB	João Pessoa
26	PE	Fernando de Noronha
27		Ipojuca
28		Recife
29	PI	Parnaíba
30		São Raimundo Nonato
31		Teresina
32	RN	Natal
33		Tibau do Sul
34	SE	Aracaju

MACRORREGIÃO CENTRO-OESTE

Nº	UF	Destino Indutor
35	DF	Brasília
36	GO	Alto Paraíso
37		Caldas Novas
38		Goiânia
39		Pirenópolis
40	MS	Bonito
41		Campo Grande
42	MT	Corumbá
43		Cáceres
44		Cuiabá

MACRORREGIÃO SUDESTE

Nº	UF	Destino Indutor
45	ES	Vitória
46	MG	Belo Horizonte
47		Diamantina
48		Ouro Preto
49		Tiradentes
50	RJ	Angra dos Reis
51		Armação dos Búzios
52		Parati
53	SP	Petrópolis
54		Rio de Janeiro
55	SP	São Paulo
56		Ilhabela

MACRORREGIÃO SUL

Nº	UF	Destino Indutor
57	PR	Curitiba
58		Foz do Iguaçu
59		Paranaguá
60	RS	Bento Gonçalves
61		Gramado
62		Porto Alegre
63	SC	Balneário Camboriú
64		Florianópolis
65		São Joaquim

Table 1: 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Regional (Índice de competitividade do turismo nacional: 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Nacional, 50)

The Serra Gaúcha (English: Gaucho Highlands), is the mountainous region in the northeastern portion of Rio Grande do Sul and known for being the home to many Brazilians of German and Italian descent, which is strongly reflected in the local architecture, gastronomy, culture, and language. Settled by European immigrants during the 19th century, the region saw an influx of Germans beginning in 1824, who settled in the lowlands. Several small towns throughout the Serra Gaúcha resemble German villages from centuries ago, juxtaposed with a backdrop of subtropical rain forest and the distinct looking araucaria pine trees. In 1875, Italian immigrants began to populate the highlands. In the towns colonized by Italian immigrants, wine production is considered an important component of the local culture and vineyards can be seen everywhere. Italian culture is still very strong in the community, which gathers together every other year in Caxias do Sul to celebrate their shared wine and culinary heritage during the Festa da Uva, one of the country's largest national festivals.

The region's climate and history have endeared it to Brazilian domestic tourists, many of whom arrive in the winter to enjoy some rare cold weather, or during December to tour cities like Gramado, which annually make a spectacle out of Christmas decorations, lights, and themed shows. Tourists interested in food and wine naturally find the region's distinct culinary history and prevalence of vineyards enticing. The extent of the current and potential touristic value of the Serra Gaúcha will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

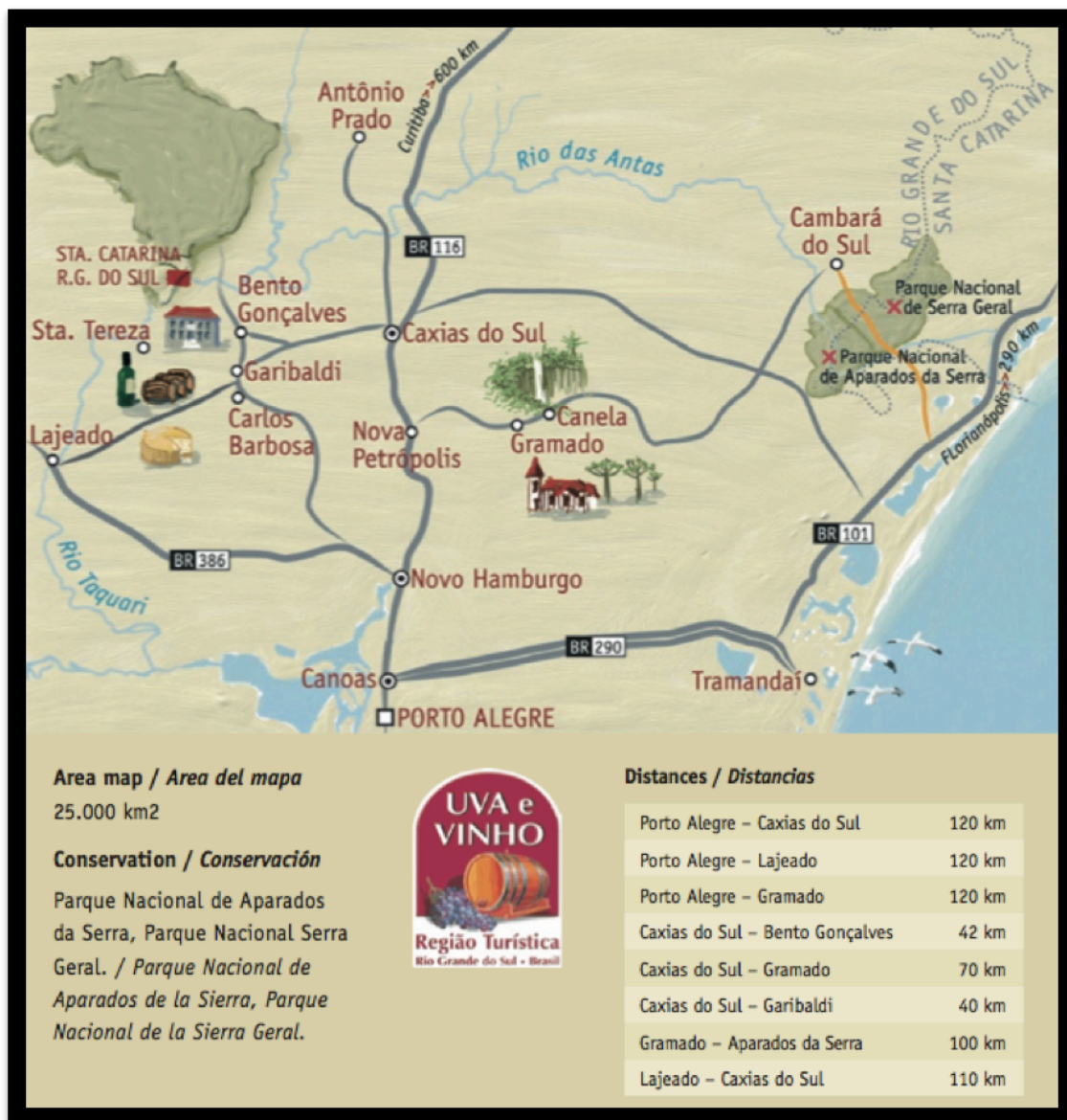


Figure 2: Tourist Map of the Serra Gaúcha (Serra Gaúcha Pamphlet)

MARKETING THE SERRA GAÚCHA

My project is structured around three general objectives. The first is to explore the evolution of tourism and tourism policy in Brazil to better understand how this process

has affected the current state of tourism in lesser-known tourist regions throughout the country. This objective led to an interest in how small cities, specifically those in the Serra Gaúcha region of southern Brazil, can best take advantage of the decentralized tourism development approach adopted by the Brazilian government in 2004 and to the second research objective, which was to gather and understand current opinions and strategies of tourism students and professionals, operating both within the Serra Gaúcha and internationally, regarding regional tourism development. Finally, the third objective was to synthesize the results from the second objective to determine aspects related to tourism development upon which municipalities within the Serra Gaúcha can improve, and ultimately to recommend appropriate and practical suggestions for development. In light of the surge in attention Brazil is enjoying due to its selection as the host of both the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, now is an optimal time for competitive touristic regions, such as the Serra Gaúcha, throughout Brazil to actively build their brand and pursue tourism development strategies tailored to their unique regional strengths and weaknesses.

Though the formal study of tourism is relatively recent, both the approaches and attitudes towards the subject and industry have been, and continue to be, constantly in flux. Academics interested in tourism tend to separate themselves by their specific areas of interest, such as ecotourism, heritage tourism, social justice tourism, or by more broad theoretical lenses such as the theory of authenticity, actor-network theory, or the theoretical underpinnings of the study of mobilities on the whole. My goal for this project, however, is for it to be pragmatic and useful to the Serra Gaúcha with respect to its regional marketing and development as it pertains to future tourism-related success. For these reasons, the guiding lens for this project is largely practical rather than

theoretical. I will, however, address various travel-motivation theories and incorporate them, where appropriate, into the justification of my recommendations.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY

My field research was conducted in the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil for five weeks in the summer of 2012. More specifically, I focused on the largest city of the region—Caxias do Sul, along with the surrounding towns of Bento Gonçalves, Cambará do Sul, Gramado, and Canela.

To evaluate the primary issues regarding tourism in southern Brazil prior to my arrival, I referenced many secondary sources to better understand the history of the region and its situation within the history of Rio Grande do Sul as well as Brazilian history on the whole. I also analyzed recent state and national tourism plans to evaluate whether or not my position was in line with or in contrast to the governmental goals for tourism development in the region. Furthermore, I conducted a literature review to ensure that this research would indeed contribute to the study of tourism rather than replicate existing data, as well as to situate this inquiry among publications concerning the increasing interest in Brazil as a tourist destination.

With this research in mind, upon my arrival in the Serra Gaúcha I sought out key informants, such as the secretaries of tourism of Bento-Gonçalves, Gramado, and Caxias do Sul; the director of the Caxias do Sul airport; as well as students enrolled in the graduate program in tourism studies at the University of Caxias do Sul. I used a combination of personal semi-structured interviews as well as written surveys as my two primary methods of qualitative data collection.

All interviews conducted in person were recorded and conducted in the locale that the interviewee identified and preferred, as well as in their native language of Portuguese. Because the formal interviews were all with government professional from whom I had obtained permission to record, I do use their actual names in this thesis. The students who participated in my research in the form of responding to a questionnaire, however, have been provided with pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

After my return to the United States, I conducted interviews with key travel leaders in the worldwide tourism industry. The assessments of these tourism experts, in conjunction with the opinions of the students and professionals involved in the current issues surrounding tourism within the Serra Gaúcha, have resulted in a unique perspective that I believe is valuable to the cities regarding effective approaches to sustainably augment their tourism rates.

REVIEW OF CHAPTERS

I begin in Chapter Two with an essentialist overview of the literature in current tourism research related to my topic, then follow with an examination of the development of tourism and tourism policy in Brazil, and conclude by situating my study of the Serra Gaúcha within this discourse. In Chapter Three, I will present a detailed description of my methodology and defend the appropriateness of my research plan before revealing the principal findings in Chapter Four. I will conclude in Chapter Five with a discussion of these results and make my subsequent recommendations. Throughout the text, quotations appear in Portuguese and English, depending on the language in which I encountered them.

Chapter Two: Contextualization

This chapter opens with a broad discussion of the history of modern tourism and how it has been studied and understood by academics and professionals. It continues with an acknowledgement of the debate surrounding tourism with regards to its ability to affect negative as well as positive change where it is implemented, largely when used as a tool for economic and social development. The focus then narrows to the history of tourism in Brazil specifically and how it has come to be regulated by federal, state, and municipal governments. After addressing the many policies enacted by the Brazilian government to manage tourism throughout the country, the discussion shifts to the rationale behind the selection of the Serra Gaúcha region as the location of research. This section includes a description of the region's potential as a tourism destination, and concludes by setting the stage for readers to understand why this research is of value to the region's tourism development and marketing goals.

HISTORY OF TOURISM

Tourism is not a modern phenomenon: Marco Polo's 13th century journeys, the "grand tour" of the British aristocracy to Europe in the 18th century, and David Livingstone's exploration of Africa in the 19th century can all be classified as examples of tourism. That said, it is Thomas Cook who is popularly regarded as the founder of "tours," with his use of a chartered train in 1841 to transport tourists between cities in Britain. Until the 1950s, tourism, especially in Europe, remained a largely domestic activity, with the majority of international travel between countries occurring within continental Europe. Following World War II, however, a combination of circumstances such as an increase in disposable income and available leisure time, coupled with

changing social attitudes toward leisure and work, increased the popularity of international travel. Tour operators began to organize inclusive holidays through the combination of prices for transport, accommodation, and related services to meet the demands and budgets of consumers demanding a foreign holiday. These package deals began to democratize travel in Europe, and traveling abroad became more accessible to those outside of the social elite.

The last quarter century has also been marked by transformative historical events, technological innovations, and social and cultural changes, both in the Western and non-Western parts of the world, that have altered the nature of tourism, its relationship with society, and the many approaches to its analysis and interpretation. The contemporary world has become marked by a high degree of fluidity:

It is a world of accelerated economic, social, and cultural change, driven by the process of globalization, rapid technological progress, and the communication and information revolutions. These forces [have] led to an increase in the tempo of life, a collapse of time and space, a cultural pluralization, a de-differentiation of social domains, and a fragmentation of lifestyles. (Cohen and Cohen, 2012)

These broad social trends and historical events have affected the scope, origins, and destinations of tourist flows, the motives and styles of travel, the structure of the tourist industry, and the relationship between tourism and ordinary life. In the 21st century, millions of people from different strata of society can travel to new tourist destinations. In this century, technological innovation, environmental protection, security measures, high quality tourism service, human resources training and education, joint ventures with foreign tourism entrepreneurs and marketing factors will all be fundamental issues that decisively affect the planning of tourism policy and development

all over the world (Gee 1997; Vasconcellos 2003). The prospects of international tourism within the foreseeable future, despite worldwide economic uncertainties, continue to be extraordinarily promising.

HISTORY OF TOURISM STUDIES

All of the aforementioned factors have strongly influenced the modes of thinking about tourism, the paradigmatic and theoretical approaches to it, and popular research issues over the years. Though certainly not an exhaustive discussion of the many theoretical approaches to the study of tourism, the following is a cursory review of the history and development of tourism studies.

Many have dismissed the idea of “tourism studies” as an oxymoron—the intellectualization of a seemingly frivolous leisure practice, which can seem inconsequential or perhaps even voyeuristic. Technically, the study of tourism within the social sciences, in an Anglo-American context, can be traced back to the 1920s. Yet, the academic study of tourism has flourished for the past 35 years, coinciding with the development of the patterns and processes of tourism (international tourism, for the most part) that were being established (Jamal and Robinson 2009). There has been, and continues to be, much debate surrounding the term “tourism studies” as it implies the status of a discipline, which has naturally provoked reactions from more traditional disciplines involved in the subject matter, ranging from complete appropriation of the subject by a specific discipline to complete refusal to address tourism as an area of study unless it can fit as a footnote in the study of a more salient or accepted area of academic research.

Regardless, there are obvious reasons for the study of tourism to be brought into academia, not the least of which is that it helps us to engage with key issues of globalization and modernity. Tourism involves trans-border mobilities, which by nature complicate traditional understandings of identity, nationalism, and tradition as well as the intertwined sociocultural and political issues (Jamal and Robinson 2009). As the importance of the subject has continued to reveal itself across disciplines, there has been a noticeable development of modes of interrogation into tourism. Different disciplines with different methodological preferences have approached tourism in such varied ways that there has been an emergence of new subfields or genres that fall under the tourism umbrella but break down the subject into researchable parts. These subgenres range from the highly specific—such gay tourism, literary tourism, and sex tourism—to more inclusive labels such as cultural tourism, heritage tourism, and ecotourism. Tourism has also been investigated spatially—Asian tourism and tourism in the Middle East, for example. The specialized interests of every researcher involved in each of these subgenres, as well as the long list of potential themes and topics yet to be explored, only serves to highlight the importance of the field as a whole.

During the 1970s, tourism scholarship was dominated by the questions of the relationship between tourism and the modern world—particularly the issue of a search for authenticity as a motivation for tourism. In his seminal article, “Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings,” Dean MacCannell argued that contemporary people seek authenticity outside modernity and that locals stage it for them (MacCannell, 1973). More specifically, MacCannell examined traveler accounts in terms of Erving Goffman’s front versus back distinction. Goffman believed every individual’s presentation of their self was a performance—an effort to create specific impressions in the minds of others. He also made an important distinction between “front stage” and

“back stage” behavior. As the term implies, “front stage” actions are visible to the audience and are part of the performance, whereas people engage in “back stage” behaviors when no audience is present (Goffman, 1959). MacCannell found that tourists try to enter “back regions” of the places they visit “because these regions are associated with intimacy of relations and authenticity of experiences” (MacCannell, 1973). He also found that tourist settings are arranged to produce the impression that a back region has been entered even when this is not the case. In tourist settings, between the front and the back there is a series of special spaces designed to accommodate tourists and to support their beliefs in the authenticity of their experiences. In his later work on ethnic tourism, MacCannell analyzed the reciprocal exchange between self-performing ‘tourees’ and the modern tourist seeking an authentic experience through travel and demonstrated that hosts often package their culture, and themselves, to appeal to tourist fantasies, in effect creating a staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1976).

Ultimately, the overwhelming popularity of the “authenticity” discourse faded, and in the 1990s a response to the increasing realization of the historic and contemporary impact that movement has on individuals and society, known as “mobilities,” began to take its place. The mobilities paradigm in the social sciences explores the movement of people, ideas, and things, as well as the broader social implication of those movements. In their 2006 publication on the development of mobilities, Mimi Sheller and John Urry presented a theoretical basis for mobilities research, the implications of which broke with the foundational assumption of twentieth-century social science that the social is constituted by a set of intense relations between individuals in close physical proximity. Instead, Sheller and Urry suggested that travel and communication technologies have enabled the proliferation of intermittent connections at a distance and that such connections are crucial in holding social life together (Sheller and Urry 2006).

From this perspective, it becomes problematic to talk about self-contained societies because significant social relations occur across local and national boundaries. It also becomes problematic to assume that social relations involve just human beings, because travel and communication technologies heavily mediate people's conceptions of themselves and their relations with others and the world. Thus, under the mobilities paradigm, the object of study should encompass those assemblages of humans and objects and their re-configuration over time and space. Humans are then to be seen as indissolubly networked with machines. The new mobilities paradigm insists on the need to examine the systemic nature of these networks and their emergent properties, and in doing so subverts some of the basic dichotomies (economic-noneconomic, local-global, people-places) on which the sociological approach to tourism has been grounded for so long.

For example, the binary concept of "home" and "away" has become progressively destabilized by contemporary communication technologies, which enable tourists to feel as a strong connection with to whichever place they desire, regardless of their global position. This binary is also complicated by the increase of multiple home ownership, the possession of more than one "home" that are both domestic and international and have various ascribed purposes. "Home" and "away" become relative to one's current resting place. Moreover, trips from new to old homes have become an essential pattern in modern life for so many people due to growing residential and labor mobility that "tourism" for much of the population constitutes movement that is simultaneously away and toward home. A more extreme example of this is the modern complexity of diasporas: "as migrant national, ethnic, or religious minorities establish multi-generational diasporic communities, their members' visits to their place of origin are

typically trips to the (old) natal home for the older generation, but away from home for the younger one” (Cohen and Cohen 2012).

Even traditional definitions of tourism itself have been challenged, leading some authors to coin the catchphrase “the end of tourism.” Conventional boundaries between distinct domains, such as work and leisure, study and entertainment, and even reality and fantasy, have been weakened. The progressive blurring of boundaries between different mobilities has de-differentiated the exclusive domain of tourism from other mobilities, such as labor/retirement/lifestyle migration, second home visits, commuting, diaspora living, exploration, volunteering, sporting activities, events, and temporary migration.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Outside of academia, the primary parties interested in the study of tourism are those working in the tourism industry or destinations seeking to increase their popularity among tourists. While these parties can benefit from understanding aspects of the authenticity and mobilities paradigms, for example, at the end of the day their concern for the theoretical questions surrounding the essence of tourism and human mobility is limited to the applications affecting their bottom line. For that, they focus primarily on asking, “What do tourists want?” Because knowledge of people’s travel motivations and its association with destination selection plays a key role in predicting future travel patterns, the tourism industry tends to zero in on travel motivation theory.

Tourist motivation can be defined as “the global integrating network of biological and cultural forces, which gives value and direction to travel choices, behavior, and experience” (Pearce, Morrison & Rutledge 1998). Countless theorists have attempted to distill tourist movement into a definable motivation, but there is of course no singular

answer, though some recurrent themes do emerge. For example the “need to escape from everyday surroundings for the purpose of relaxation, and discovering new things, places, and people” are often alluded to (Banerjea 2007). Most of the discussions in the tourist motivation literature have tended to revolve around the theory of push and pull motivation. Basically, this is a two-step process involving push factors, which motivate an individual to leave their home, and pull factors, which draw an individual to travel to a specific place (Hanafiah et al. 2010)

Despite the obvious value in understanding purpose and motivation for tourist activities for those planning and marketing tourist destinations, there are many difficulties in determining tourism motivations. According to Seaton (1997) people rarely think about the underlying reasons for their actions. Even when these motivations can be identified, they often include contradictory impulses such as the desire for novelty and adventure (exploring a new place) vs. the desire for familiarity and security (staying in a hotel with familiar comforts). Another problem cited by Seaton (1997) is that it is often difficult to distinguish individual motives from socially constructed reasons for doing things that they have been programmed to give, which may not accurately reflect the real reason for a trip.

Nonetheless, those who study tourism motivations remain optimistic about attempts to understand what prompts people to leave their homes and travel to new places. Aside from this research helping destinations to develop techniques that could help them to both manage tourists and their impacts, as well as to craft enjoyable experiences, understanding tourists’ motivations may help to explain why certain places are more successful than others and why some continue to grow, stagnate, or decline as tastes and fashions change (Banerjea 2007).

“PROBLEMATIZING” TOURISM & TOURISM’S POSITIVE POTENTIALITIES

Despite the fact that many big-name international organizations such as World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Union, and the United Nations encourage tourism as a preferred development strategy in developing countries and have endorsed and funded tourism development programs, there is a heavy debate between those who seek to problematize tourism and those who see only its positive potentialities (Hawkins and Mann 2007). The rhetoric used by the agencies listed above seeks to legitimize tourism as an industry that helps to mitigate poverty while avoiding the negative externalities that come with other more environmentally destructive and socially contentious development strategies such as resource extraction. Many developing countries have agreed with this logic, and in 2007, 78 low-income countries that applied for loans from the World Bank cited tourism as one of their development strategies (Hawkins and Mann 2007).

Tourism has served as a vital means for countries with few economic resources to transition to service-based economies that help to generate foreign exchange, attract investment capital, and create jobs (Kalisch 2010; Meyer 2010). In 2006, tourists spent three hundred and thirty-three billion U.S. dollars in developing countries; in 2008, international tourism arrivals totaled over 922 million people globally. Tourism has seen a rapid and explosive growth as an economic development strategy in countries in the “global South,” in which at least 50 countries rely on tourism as the primary source of foreign exchange earnings (Lacher and Nepal 2010). By the year 2000, developing countries throughout the world saw nearly 292.6 million tourist entries cumulatively into their respective countries, which was an enormous increase in the number of tourists

traveling, almost 95%, since 1990 (Kalisch 2010). Those numbers have only continued to grow at an impressive rate.

Tourism inherently brings economic activity to developing countries and can help local economies, which previously might have had little to no economic activity, grow, leading many proponents of tourism to claim that the tourism industry will help to alleviate poverty through the arrival of foreign revenue (Meyer 2010). The development of tourism within a region also necessitates the creation of many low-skilled jobs, such as in cleaning, food, construction or service areas, which tend to employ large amounts of young people, women, and unskilled laborers. Thus, increased tourism to a region can help to create economic opportunities for marginalized segments of the population that previously might not have had ready access to employment opportunities (Die 2012).

But despite the admirable goals and impressive statistics, it must be recognized that tourism clearly has the potential to cause significant damage as well. One example that is hotly debated is the case of ecotourism, a form of tourism that aims to build environmental and cultural awareness and respect; provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts, direct financial benefits for conservation, and financial benefits and empowerment for local people; and raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate (International Ecotourism Society 2013). These idealized tenets resonate with those who believe in the potential of this type of tourism development to provide a low-cost, profitable, and socially and environmentally responsible method of growth for developing countries. However, the truth resists simplicity, and ecotourism has been critiqued for a variety of legitimate reasons. Despite the potential for ecotourism-friendly business to help raise awareness among tourists and local communities about the need for sustainable, cooperative, and responsible tourism practices, there is no set, regulated system for determining a group, organization, or

business as an ecotourism participant, which has led to confusion among consumers about appropriate standards and practices. Furthermore, the certification systems that do exist are often cost-prohibitive to many developing countries involved in the tourism industry and interested in marketing their destinations as ecotourism compliant.

Further critiques of tourism promotion in developing countries address the potential for negative economic impacts. For example, though many countries may derive a large portion of their national income from tourism, they are still largely at the mercy of the influx of wealthier, largely Western, tourists for that income. In effect, these countries are externally dependent and therefore vulnerable to the shocks of global financial and economic fluctuations. Furthermore, much of the development that occurs due to tourism, such as airports, retail centers, and hotels, is not necessarily for the benefit of or widely used by local populations. Much of the wealth that stays in the country from the tourism industry is also usually concentrated within elite classes of the receiving country. Tourism development definitely results in job creation, but many of the service jobs generated by the tourism industry are low waged jobs; the majority of the profits go to foreign investors or local capitalists and elites in the industry (Urry 1990; Die 2012). Thus, many of the acclaimed benefits from tourism do not definitively translate into real reductions in poverty or substantive employment growth due to “stratified, hierarchical global and local economic and sociopolitical systems” (Die 2012).

It should also be noted that the effects of tourism cannot be evaluated in purely economic terms. Tourism is enmeshed within social networks, so the social implications of tourism must also be considered. One common critique of tourism is that it creates troubling social relationships that are uncomfortably reminiscent of colonial relationships. Colonialism depended upon subordination and power play between classes, races, genders, and nations, and some argue that through tourism in developing countries,

many of the same patterns of “servility, exclusion, and domination” are repeated (Die 2012, 17). For example, locals, with the exception of staff, are barred from entering certain beaches and hotels in tourist destinations, as in Cancún, México (Torres 2005).

Therefore, despite the fact that tourism has been endorsed as a development strategy with the potential to lead to the reduction of poverty, creation of jobs, and economic growth, there are obvious concerns surrounding the industry. Economic and political systems worldwide are structured in such a way that has led to inequitable distribution of the benefits of tourism. That said, there has been new growth of some types of tourism that seek to promote socially and environmentally just forms of travel, though the extent to which these endeavors are successful in achieving their goals is widely debated. Nonetheless, the fact that tourism is being actively critiqued, reviewed, and encouraged to evolve in a sustainable manner is heartening.

For the purposes of this thesis, I have made every effort—both in the selection of my region of interest as well as in the formulation of my research questions—to steer clear of issues that are too hotly debated. For example, I agree that tourism has the potential to cause as much damage as good, regardless of how well intentioned, and would feel very uncomfortable advocating for tourism development in what I and many others perceive to be very sensitive parts of Brazil, such as ecotourism development throughout the Amazon or favela tours through Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro. As I will address in further detail later in this chapter, my region of interest—the Serra Gaúcha of Rio Grande do Sul—is filled with small cities and towns with pre-existing tourism infrastructure that is regulated by the local governments, all of which desire to increase tourism to their cities. Located in Southern Brazil, which has a standard of living comparable to that of many developed nations, the Serra Gaúcha is a comparatively low-risk destination with regards to many of the concerns addressed above. With this in mind,

I will now shift my attention to focus on Brazil's history with tourism policy and development.

TOURISM IN BRAZIL

Arguably, the first international tourists to Brazil were the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, who arrived thousands of years ago by crossing the Bering land bridge into Alaska and then moving south. For the purposes of this research, however, the story of tourism to modern Brazil really begins around 1970. From the early 1970s to the present, international tourism in modern Brazil has undergone four main stages of development (Lohmann and Dredge 2012). As of 1979, Brazil received nearly one million international visitors, up from a mere quarter of a million in 1970. Despite the fact that the country was ruled by a dictatorship at the time, the government still made an effort to promote the country overseas, largely through campaigns initiated by the Brazilian Tourism Institute, Embratur, which was officially formed in 1966. Unfortunately, political and economic instability throughout the 1980s caused significant difficulties for the tourism market and meant that the decade concluded with international tourist numbers that were lower than in 1980. Nonetheless, the market rebounded and in 1999 Brazil attracted nearly five million tourists—a five-fold increase over the decade. Many attribute this growth to the end of the dictatorial regime and efforts to open the economy to international investors and trade through, for example, international hotel chains establishing themselves in major cities and in tourist destinations (Lohmann and Dredge 2012). Curiously, the country was unable to attract a significantly higher number of international tourists during the 2000s, even despite the creation of the Ministry of Tourism in 2003, and the refocus of Embratur to market Brazil exclusively to overseas

audiences. This suggested that Brazil had reached its international demand peak at approximately five million tourists based on current attractions and market approaches and that a new stimulus was needed (Lohmann and Dredge 2012).

The major international tourist markets to Brazil are neighboring South American countries, the USA and Europe. In 2010, the top ten markets to Brazil included (in order of importance) Argentina (27.1 per cent), Chile, France, Paraguay, Portugal and Spain (3 to 4 per cent), which totaled 71.8 per cent of international tourists. These countries were consistently among the top ten markets for tourism in Brazil during the period from 2006 to 2010, with only minor changes in the order of ranking throughout this period (Ministério do Turismo 2011). Most tourists to Brazil travel to Rio de Janeiro and other easily accessible sites that are in or around urban centers with well-established hospitality industries. Salvador and other parts of Bahia are major tourist attractions, and increasing numbers of vacationers are visiting other coastal areas of the Northeast. Eco-tourism is moderately popular in the Amazon region, while in the South the beaches of Santa Catarina draw large crowds of Argentine tourists (Brazil 2013).

In 2010, arrivals by air transport accounted for 70 percent of total international arrivals, followed by international arrivals by road transport at 27.1 per cent. In 2009 the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism commissioned a survey that showed the international tourism demand in Brazil as primarily consisting of leisure (45.5 per cent) and business/convention/event (22.9 per cent) tourists. The main reasons that leisure tourists cited for travelling to Brazil included its sunny weather and beaches (61.5 per cent); nature, ecotourism or adventure (23.3 per cent); and culture (9.7 per cent). International tourists stay for an average of 17.5 days in Brazil, and two-thirds of tourists have visited Brazil previously. International tourists spend an average of US\$58.19 per day, though business tourists spend almost twice this amount (US\$106.14). The types of

accommodation that travellers use include hotels or serviced apartments (51.6 per cent), homes of friends and relatives (28.2 per cent) and rented accommodations (9.2 per cent) (Ministério do Turismo 2011).

Brazil has a large and vibrant domestic market, and in most destinations Brazilian tourists far outnumber foreign visitors. Domestic demand, however, differs significantly from international tourism demand. Although there are no precise data regarding actual domestic tourism demand in Brazil, a survey commissioned by the Ministry of Tourism in 2006 provides some indication (FIPE 2007). First, domestic trips are made predominantly by road transport, with private cars (45.7 per cent), coaches (25.5 per cent) and charter coaches (7.9 per cent) accounting for eight of ten trips and air transport representing 12.1 per cent of domestic travel. Second, the main types of accommodation that domestic travelers use are the homes of friends and relatives (60.2 per cent), hotels or private accommodation providers (25.1 per cent) and rented accommodation (6.4 per cent). The average spending by domestic tourists is lower than that of international visitors (FIPE 2007). Brazilians visiting abroad spend significantly more money than do foreigners visiting Brazil. Among Brazilians' preferred destinations are Uruguay, Argentina, and the United States (Brazil 2013). Finally, the duration of stays by domestic tourists is shorter than that of international visitors, with domestic tourists spending an average of nine nights in 2005 (FIPE 2007). These domestic travel patterns are a result of the lower income of the average domestic traveller in comparison with the average international tourist (Lohmann and Dredge 2012).

For these reasons, a focus on marketing to international tourists is a smart strategy, especially as it is likely that the increased arrival and interest of international tourists in a destination could increase the desirability of the destination with domestic tourists as well. The World Tourism Organization projects that international tourism to

Brazil will continue growing (5.2%) above the world average (4.3%) resulting in 14.1 million arrivals by 2020 (Instituto Ecobrasil 2013). With the unique distinction of hosting at least two large events in the next decade (the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro), Brazil has a significant opportunity to develop its appeal to international tourists and to eventually begin operating at a new level within the international tourism arena (Lohmann and Dredge 2012).

TOURISM POLICY IN BRAZIL

Since the 1990s, when Brazil began to engage more actively in tourism development, policy, and planning, tourism has become a major driver of economic activity and community development in Brazil. New policies and approaches coupled with growing expertise and investment in tourism have brought significant transformation in tourism products, destination development, and community involvement. Brazil offers many cultural and natural attractions but, similarly to many other developing countries, it still struggles with keeping up levels of infrastructure, product development and accessibility, service quality, market access and workforce training.

Until the late 1980s, most tourism development in Brazil took place in a fragmented way with little planning, which hindered the exploitation of tourism as a social and economic development tool (Madeiros de Araujo and Dredge 2012). Though Embratur, the Brazilian Tourism Institute, was established on November 18, 1966, its initial primary objectives were simply to foster tourism activity by making feasible the conditions for the generation of jobs, income, and development throughout the country. It was not until 2003, through the establishment of the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism that Embratur's goals shifted to the promotion, marketing, and support of tourism

destinations, services, and products throughout the country, tourism services, and Brazilian products for the international market. The creation of the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism was the first clear indication that the federal government valued tourism enough to take a decidedly proactive approach in its regulation, though the government did begin to draft some tourism policies in the mid-1990s.

In 1994 the federal government created Brazil's National Program for the Municipiplization of Tourism, the purpose of which was to decentralize tourism planning and to support state and local governments through the provision of consultants and other types of expert personnel. The idea underpinning this program was that, with the support of federal tourism organizations, state and local governments would create a local tourism development agenda designed around a participatory planning process which would help focus tourism planning on the interests and concerns of the local population (Madeiros de Araujo and Dredge 2012). In 1996, Embratur introduced the National Tourism Policy (PNT), which was to be implemented over the period of 1996-99 and serve as the overarching national tourism policy framework. The PNT remained the main policy platform guiding the organization and development of tourism in Brazil until 2002 and brought about very important changes to how tourism was planned (Sancho and Irving 2010). More specifically, the PNT furthered the concept of decentralized destination planning and management and promoted the liberalization of the economy with a focus on regional and local development. Under the PNT state and municipal governments were charged with the responsibility for most activities associated with tourism planning and management (Madeiros de Araujo and Dredge 2012).

As previously mentioned, the founding of the Ministry of Tourism in 2003 marked an important shift in tourism management for Brazil. One of the Ministry's first acts was the launch of a National Tourism Plan for the period of 2003-2007, which would

take the place of the PNT of 1996. The 2003-2007 Plan portrays tourism's new priority status as a development strategy aligned with the country's macro-strategies for both social inclusion and socioeconomic development (Sancho and Irving 2010):

Tourism in Brazil shall contemplate the regional diversity, based on the generation of products that are marked by their Brazilian character, allowing for the expansion of the internal market and for the effective insertion of the Country in the world tourism scene. The generation of employment, occupation and income, the reduction of social and regional inequalities and the balance of payments indicate the horizon to be achieved through the indicated strategic actions. (National Tourism Plan 2003-2007, 21)

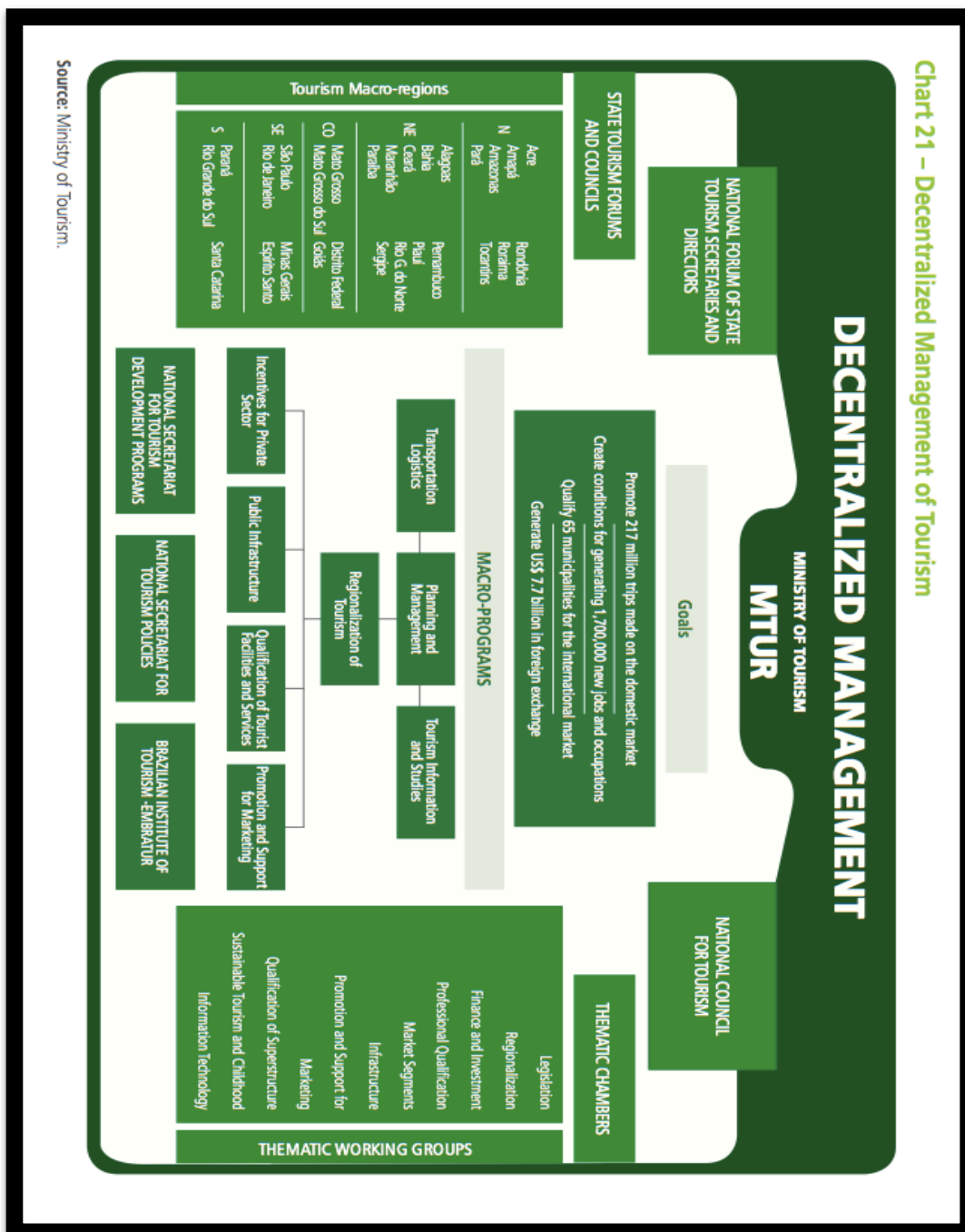
As an immediate follow-up to this plan, in 2004 the Ministry of Tourism launched another important policy initiative regarding tourism development and planning in Brazil that was called the National Program for the Regionalization of Tourism. The focus of this program was on facilitating regional growth and to be more conducive to the exploration and development of tourism products and experiences associated with Brazil's diverse regional natural and cultural heritage (Madeiros de Araujo and Dredge 2012).

The National Program for the Regionalization of Tourism was a logical progression from previous decentralizing policies and addressed the issue of the federal government being so distant from the state and local governments. Decentralization had become a theme throughout all of Brazil's tourism development policies, the idea being that decentralization would lead to more efficient management, as well as diversification of tourism offerings throughout the country, a goal the Ministry of Tourism has held since its inception. In fact, the last of the five specific targets for tourism development set for Brazil by the Ministry in the 2003-2007 National Tourism Plan was to expand the

Brazilian tourism offer, developing at least three quality products for each State of the Federation and the Federal District.

Brazil's tourism offer has been marked by the promotion of a few destinations located at punctual areas, generating products of repetitive appeal. The products presently being offered do not contemplate Brazil's cultural plurality and regional diversity. There is potential to be revealed and worked upon in the interior of the country, and there is an urgent need for finding alternatives for local and regional development. We wish to develop tourism based on the principle of sustainability, working in a participatory, decentralized and systemic manner, stimulating the integration and the consequent organization and expansion of supply. The effective involvement of state governments, strategic partners, the private sector, municipalities and the community is essential to this process. Thus we will create an environment for achieving quality, diversity and competitiveness for the Brazilian tourism product.... which will provide for conditions for an increase in the domestic and international flow of tourists and improve the social and economic conditions of municipalities and regions. (National Tourism Plan 2003-2007, 30)

Chart 21 – Decentralized Management of Tourism



Source: Ministry of Tourism.

Figure 3: Decentralized Management of Tourism (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, 45)

This 2003-2007 target evolved into Goal #3 of the four listed in the 2007-2010 National Tourism Plan, in which the government aimed generally to increase domestic travel, expand job creation opportunities, improve destination planning and development, and improve foreign exchange earnings. Specifically, Goal #3 was to: “Bring 65 tourist destinations up to international quality standards” (National Tourism Plan 2003-2007). To choose these 65 destinations, the Ministry looked at the 200 tourist regions in the country, as previously identified by the National Program for the Regionalization of Tourism, and selected the itineraries and regions capable of being developed to international quality standards. In order to prioritize destinations along the 87 selected itineraries, going through 116 Brazilian tourist regions, the Ministry considered evaluations and values attributed by the International Tourism Marketing Plan (Aquarela Plan 2020), the Domestic Tourism Marketing Plan (Cores do Brasil Plan), and other studies and surveys of federal investments and potentials of these destinations. Based on this study, 65 tourist destinations were picked to induce development along the respective itineraries and tourist regions, in all of Brazil’s 27 States. The intention of Goal #3 was to develop all of these destinations to international standards by 2010 in order for them to serve as models for regional tourism development. The hope was that their successful experiences and practices would be multiplied for other destinations in the country’s tourist regions.

It is intended that... these destinations can be structured to reach this quality standard, through work by the Ministry of Tourism and its national, State, regional and municipal partner institutions. This work will be based on the principle of environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability, in a participatory, decentralized and systemic fashion, encouraging the integration and consequent organization and expansion of tourism supply. (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, 52)

Significant in the evolution of Brazilian tourism policy and planning, all of the initiatives, programs, policies, and plans established beginning in the 1990s invigorated tourist investment and development and have enhanced and clarified institutional arrangements for tourism. Tourism in Brazil has been established as an important policy sphere and the creation of the Ministry of Tourism created a federal institutional base, which has in turn strengthened the state and municipal involvement in the sector. All of these levels of government were intended to work together in the development of the 65 selected tourist destinations, and while there has been definite progress, there is still much room for improvement. For example, though the “competitiveness” of these destinations was assessed between 2008 and 2010, there was no final say on whether or not all of the destinations attained their goal of being up to “international standards,” nor has there been further follow-up as to whether or not the destinations actually have affected positive change in their surrounding regions (Índice de Competitividade do Turismo Nacional: 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Nacional). In many ways, the federal government set the bar, opened up funds for infrastructural improvements, and expected state and municipal governments to take care of the rest, an approach that has led to mixed results. In the final 2010 assessment of the destinations, Luiz Barretto, Minister of the State of Tourism, only offered this vague conclusion:

Nossa recomendação aos agentes públicos é que usem o índice como base para o esforço e o investimento necessários para transformar a realidade dos municípios brasileiros. O processo de avaliação tem-se revelado uma ferramenta eficaz e indutora de comportamento competitivo. O índice também estimula a profissionalização do setor, que é uma das metas do Ministério do Turismo. Afinal, do que adiantaria dispormos de um rico patrimônio cultural e das mais belas paisagens se não oferecemos equipamentos turísticos qualificados e uma cidade preparada para receber os turistas? A qualificação dos 65 destinos indutores reflete o desejo de melhorar a oferta turística doméstica: produtos que

façam o turista permanecer por mais tempo, hotéis qualificados, bom atendimento em bares e restaurantes, roteiros integrados e produtos diferenciados. Pensar um projeto de futuro para o desenvolvimento turístico do Brasil não é possível de uma hora para outra. O processo é longo. Vamos, pois, alcançar nossos objetivos com seriedade e profissionalismo. (Índice de Competitividade do Turismo Nacional 2010, 7)

Barretto's noncommittal and ambiguous commentary speaks to the considerable challenges regarding the implementation of tourism plans and projects, and in achieving the development objectives established by the federal government.

Despite efforts to strengthen municipal institutions and to establish tourism organizations, many municipalities have not been very successful at facilitating and encouraging tourism development (Madeiros de Araujo and Dredge 2012). For significant progress to be made in the future, municipal governments must find a way to become an active participant in their own tourism development. It is with this in mind that I move now to a discussion of the potential for individualized tourism development in an established tourist region of Brazil in which two of the aforementioned 65 “competitive” tourist destinations are located—the Serra Gaúcha in Rio Grande do Sul.

TOURISTIC COMPETITIVENESS OF THE SERRA GAÚCHA

Two cities in the Serra Gaúcha, Gramado and Bento-Gonçalves, were ranked as very competitive among the list of 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Regional. Though these were the only two specific municipalities selected for the list, the entire region is rich with unique qualities that make it attractive to tourists. Divided into three cultural micro-regions—gaucho, German, and Italian—the Serra Gaúcha is an assortment of distinctive architecture, heritage, natural landscape, gastronomy, and people, all of which set it apart from common Brazilian stereotypes.



Figure 4: Fortaleza Canyon (Fui e Voltei Pra Contar)

What is known as the gaúcho micro-region of the Serra Gaúcha is essentially the only part that did not experience a mass influx of European immigrants. Here, the stereotypical gaúcho culture remains strong and resembles that found in the Pampas. In small cities such as Bom Jesus, São Francisco de Paula, Cambará do Sul, and São José

dos Ausentes, there are leather workshops and the fabrication of other typical gaúcho scenarios such as cattle ranching and predominantly rural ways of life. These scenes are complimented by the dramatic landscape, much of which is under protection of the Aparados da Serra and Serra Geral national parks, replete with many enormous canyons, the most well known being Itaimbezinho, Fortaleza, and Malacara.



Figure 5: Example of German Architecture in Gramado
(<http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficheiro:Gramado.7.jpg>)

The German micro-region, commonly referred to as the Região das Hortênsias [Hydrangea Region] includes the tourist destinations of Gramado, Canela, and Novo

Petrópolis, all of which are located within a short drive's distance from one another. The first German immigrants to settle in the region began arriving in the first half of the 19th century and peaked in 1850. Even today it is possible to hear German spoken throughout the area, though it is largely restricted to the older generations in specific clusters in the interior. But aside from language, the German influence is most noticeable in the gastronomy, architecture, and traditional celebrations found throughout the region.



Figure 6: Vineyards in Bento Gonçalves (<http://www.autograph-hotels.marriott.com/hotel/57/hotel-spa-do-vinho/>)

Often called “Little Italy,” the Italian micro-region of the Serra Gaúcha includes the cities of Carlos Barbosa, Garibaldi, Bento-Gonçalves, Farroupilha, Flores da Cunha, and Caxias do Sul. The most populous city in the Serra Gaúcha, and second most

populous in the state, Caxias do Sul, was the first location of Italian settlements beginning in 1875, shortly after the influx of German immigrants. Because the German immigrants had already settled in the lower altitudes, the Italians chose to climb the mountains and colonize the higher ground. As with Germans, it is possible to hear some Italian dialects spoken in the micro-region, but the strongest legacy of Italian heritage throughout the area is the production of wine, which became the economic base of the region. The wine is always paired with food traditional and specific to the region, which is to say that it is a unique fusion of items that is not simply Italian, though pasta is an obvious staple. The largest festival in the entire state of Rio Grande do Sul takes place biannually in Caxias do Sul—the Festa da Uva. During the Festa da Uva, the Caxias do Sul pavilions host thousands of tourists, predominantly from South America, who come to taste Brazilian cheeses, grapes, and wines. Nightly parades through the city are another tradition, all of which is presided over by a young woman deemed the Rainha da Festa da Uva and two Princesas, all of whom compete in a beauty pageant to win the honors. A queen was first selected for the Festa da Uva in 1933, and it is most common for the women to display decidedly European features that reflect the Italian heritage of the region (Festa da Uva de Caxias do Sul).

The Serra Gaúcha is, without a doubt, an important tourist destination for the state Rio Grande do Sul, second only to the state's capital of Porto Alegre. According to the Ministry of Tourism, however, the majority of tourists to the state are Brazilian nationals from Santa Catarina, Paraná, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro (Plano de Desenvolvimento do Turismo do RS 2012-2015). Of those who do visit the Serra Gaúcha, the vast majority stay in and around Gramado. This is not completely surprising, as the city has done an excellent job of diversifying its tourist attractions, improving the

quality of its tourism services, and ensuring that it can attract tourists as much as possible throughout the year.

For example, in 1986 there was a felt need to reinvent their “Festa das Hortênsias,” a traditional festival that took place in December and had faded in popularity over time. Because December was a time of low visitation to Gramado (as tourists preferred visiting in the winter to enjoy the legitimately seasonal weather uncommon throughout the rest of the country), the city decided to take advantage of a preexisting holiday and created an entirely new attraction based around Christmas. The then mayor Pedro Bertolucci and his Secretary of Tourism Luciano Peccin studied various ways to improve tourism in Gramado and they decided upon a themed beautification project. Luciano Peccin had returned from Disney World where he saw the various illuminations and thought of bringing a light spectacular to Gramado at Christmas to attract tourists. To the lights, they decided to add music piped through speakers in stores throughout the city; decorated the lamps along Avenida Borges de Medeiros; elaborate fir trees topped with red bows lining the main avenue (Natal Luz de Gramado). Christmas carolers and fireworks put the finishing touches on the event, and the 12th Biannual Festa das Hortênsias initiated the first “Natal Luz,” which has essentially become a nearly three-month-long reenactment of the Nutcracker annually.

Gramado has done an impressive job of fostering its own tourism industry, in more ways than simply the creation of Natal Luz in the 1980s. The city also holds a traditional artisan festival, FEARTE, which honors the cultural heritage of the Italian and German immigrants who settled the Serra Gaúcha; Chocofest, an Easter-time festival that celebrates Gramado’s popular handcrafted chocolate industry; and the Festival do Cinema, a film festival that has been held annually since 1973. The festival, which pays special attention to Brazilian and Latin American films and filmmakers, has grown in

popularity and prestige over the years and is now the largest and most important film event in Latin America (Festival de Gramado).



Figure 7: Natal Luz in Gramado (<http://www.natal-luz-de-gramado.com/>)

With all of this to offer, it is not surprising that tourists flock to Gramado more than any other destination in the Serra Gaúcha. During an average stay (between three and seven days) some tourists will venture out to Canela (a mere 13-minute drive according to Google Maps) in order to see the Parque do Caracol, the site of a rather impressive natural waterfall. Occasionally, other tourists will set aside one day of their trip for a quick tour of Bento Gonçalves (only an hour away by car), but overall Gramado significantly leads the rest of the municipalities in the Serra Gaúcha with respect to

tourism. There are two important takeaways from this: 1) Gramado's tourism development has been predominantly initiated and carried out by the city itself beginning earlier than when tourism began to be regulated at the federal level. 2) Gramado's success in tourism has not seemed to greatly affect the success of the municipalities throughout the rest of the region. Both of these facts, though admittedly anecdotal and singular examples, suggest that the goals of the 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Regional have yet to be accomplished as fully as originally intended.

THE FUTURE OF TOURISM IN THE SERRA GAÚCHA

In March of 2013, the State Board of Tourism of Rio Grande do Sul (CONETUR) and the Secretary of Tourism of the State (SETUR) met for the presentation of the Programa RS Mais Turismo and for a discussion of the initiation of Comissões e Câmaras Temáticas for the tourism sector. The initiative is a set of actions that contribute to the implementation of the Plano Diretor do Turismo for the state, and aims to strengthen tourism management, improve the quality of the tourist offerings, and to promote and support the commercialization of tourism (Bellegard 2013). The total investment by the state reaches US\$ 25 million, though Secretary of Tourism Abgail Pereira highlighted other investments promoted by the State as well, such as the US\$ 4 million spent on promotion of gaúcho destinations in national and international markets and the R\$ 107,500 in tourism infrastructure. “Em 2013, nós executaremos projetos que totalizam investimentos na ordem de R\$ 7 milhões em promoção dos destinos gaúchos, R\$ 7 milhões em infraestrutura turística, R\$ 8 milhões na qualificação profissional de mais de 12 mil trabalhadores que estarão preparados para receber turistas durante a Copa do

Mundo,” Pereira said (Bellegard 2013). Tourism development is not only a focus of the federal government but also for the state of Rio Grande do Sul, especially in light of the upcoming World Cup and Olympics during which the eyes and interest of the world will be fixed on Brazil.

As discussed, the model of decentralized management of tourism deployed in Brazil by the Ministry of Tourism allows for each level of government—federal, regional, and municipal—to seek their own development strategies and methods in accordance with their specific realities. However, for tourism regions throughout Brazil to actually develop in a manner attractive to tourists (especially potential international tourists that will have their eyes on the country in the coming years with the World Cup and the Olympics), active participation on the part of the local governments appears to be vital. Regionalization is not just the act of grouping destinations with relative proximity and similarities (Regionalização do Turismo). There must be a democratic, participative, and harmonious dialogue between public and private sectors and the communities involved if Brazil is to have any hope of developing a successful tourism sector that permeates the interior of the country and does not simply rely on the sun, sand, and sea destinations along the coast.

The Serra Gaúcha has already distinguished itself as a “competitive” tourist region, a distinction recognized by the federal government with the selection of Bento Gonçalves and Gramado for the list of 65 Destinos Indutores do Desenvolvimento Turístico Regional. Though the Serra Gaúcha already attracts a fair amount of Brazilian tourists (in comparison with the rest of the state of Rio Grande do Sul), it does not attract many international tourists—the tourist demographic that tends to stay the longest and spend the most. Furthermore, much of the tourism to the Serra Gaúcha remains concentrated in Gramado, despite the fact that the rest of the region has many unique

qualities, events, and attractions that would prove enticing to tourists if packaged and marketed wisely. Thus, it is my belief that certain changes in strategy regarding the management and marketing of tourism could be implemented by municipalities throughout the Serra Gaúcha that would prove beneficial to all participating destinations.

In this chapter I have addressed the first of my research objectives, which was to explore the evolution of tourism and tourism policy in Brazil in order to better understand how this process has affected the current state of tourism in lesser-known tourist regions throughout the country. In the next chapter I will explain the methodology I chose to address my research question regarding how small cities, specifically those in the Serra Gaúcha, can best take advantage of the decentralized tourism development approach utilized by the Brazilian government in order to foster their own successful tourism sector.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This study used fundamental qualitative research methods to assess the current state of tourism to the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil in order to formulate key recommendations for the improvement of the industry within the region. In this chapter, I will address the appropriateness of my research design; provide detailed descriptions of the settings and participants involved; explain my instrumentation, procedure, and data analysis; and conclude with a discussion of ethical concerns, delimitations, and limitations of the research.

APPROPRIATENESS OF THE RESEARCH METHOD

The primary inquiry of this study is at its core a form of marketing research:

the function that links the consumers, customers, and public to the marketer through information — information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications. (Definition of Marketing)

The collection of such information would be limited by adherence to a single guiding set of philosophic assumptions in the form of one established qualitative methodology. Therefore, the most appropriate research method is a blend of qualitative methodologies, often referred to as “noncategorical qualitative research” (Thorne 1997) or “fundamental qualitative method” (Sandelowski 2000). This approach exhibits some or all of the

characteristics of other qualitative methodologies but makes no claim to any one in particular.

In other words, the fundamental qualitative method uses techniques of ethnography, the case study method, grounded theory, and techniques of action research but does not claim it is either ethnography, case study, grounded theory, or action research. While this may appear to be a loose method that incorporates the use of interviews, observations, and document analysis in data collection, this should not suggest that the approach is less rigorous, as I will demonstrate in the remainder of this chapter. It is also important to note that through this approach, the collected data are interpreted to explain the primary research questions but not with the intention of building on or developing an abstract theory.

PARTICIPANTS

The selection of participants for this study was purposive: Participants were selected based on their involvement in and knowledge of tourism specific to the Serra Gaúcha (such as Secretaries of Tourism of key cities within the region) or based on their expert knowledge of tourism development and marketing. All participants were either asked to answer a questionnaire tailored to their specific knowledge base or interviewed, either in person at the location and in the language of their choosing, or over the phone in English.

The breakdown of the participants is as follows:

15: Total Participants

3: Students in the Masters of Tourism graduate program at the University of Caxias do Sul: (Questionnaire; Names changed to protect identity)

7: Professionals selected for their involvement in tourism specific to the Serra Gaúcha

- Secretary of Tourism of Gramado, **Rosa Helena Volk (Questionnaire)**
- Secretary of Tourism of Bento Gonçalves, **Lúcia Conci (Semi-structured interview)**
- Former Secretary of Tourism of Caxias do Sul, **Jaison Barbosa (Semi-structured interview)**
- Director of Hugo Cantergiani Regional Airport [in Caxias do Sul, the only airport in the Serra Gaúcha], **José Henrique (Semi-structured interview)**
- Director of Tourism Agency “Arte do Turismo,” **Jaison Antonio Papi (Questionnaire)**
- President of the Chamber of Industry, Commerce and Services of Caxias do Sul (Câmara de Indústria Comércio e Serviços de Caxias do Sul), **Carlos Heinen (Semi-structured interview)**
- Professor of Tourism Studies at the University of Caxias do Sul, **Rafael José dos Santos (Questionnaire)**

5: Professionals selected for the expert knowledge of tourism development and marketing

- **Costas Christ (Questionnaire)**— An award-winning travel writer and editor at large for *National Geographic Traveler*. He is a former Global Travel Editor and World Class columnist for *National Geographic Adventure*. His column, “Tales From The Frontier,” appears in *Traveler*. He is best known as one of the world’s leading sustainable tourism experts, whose work and travels have taken him to more than 125 countries across six continents. He serves as Chairman of Judges for the World Travel and Tourism Council Tourism for Tomorrow Awards, which recognize best practices in the travel industry that support the protection of

cultural and natural heritage. He also writes the Go Green travel column for *Virtuoso Life*, the largest circulation travel trade magazine.

- **Melanie Brandman (Semi-structured interview)** — Founder and CEO of The Brandman Agency, a global communications agency that helps world's most prestigious travel and lifestyle brands showcase their strength, enhance their reputation, and grow their business. Clients include: Barbados Tourism Authority, Gold Coast Tourism, Qantas Airways, Orient-Express Hotels, and Worldview Travel. One of the most credible travel experts in the business, Melanie has served as Vice President of Corporate Affairs for InterContinental Hotels & Resorts in London. She has since gone on to start several other successful travel ventures, including The Travel Curator, an online travel site that curates city guides for top destinations.
- **Courtney Sculley (Questionnaire)** — Account Manager for the International, West Coast, and Midwest markets at the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau. Courtney has been working in the tourism industry for three years, prior to which she worked with international leisure and media groups. Acting as an ambassador to Austin, Texas, Courtney is charged with marketing Austin as a premier business and leisure travel destination.
- **David Morris (Semi-structured interview)** — Founder and director of David Morris International, a marketing firm that provides cost-effective, executive level sales and marketing solutions for travel companies seeking goal oriented individuals with proven results in their field to increase sales, improve profitability, and expand market share. For more than 35 years, David Morris has been to the top of his profession with Cunard, Crystal and most recently, as Exec VP Sales & Marketing Worldwide for Silversea Cruises. Throughout his career,

David has maintained contacts and friendships with the "Who's Who" of industry, both inside and outside of travel. These relationships are key to his unique ability to revitalize existing business and cultivate new business where it had not previously existed.

- **Ash Ryan Huzenlaub (Questionnaire)** — Accomplished entrepreneur and director of Ascho Group, LLC. Since its founding, Ashco Group has teamed with entrepreneurs, investment partnerships and/or corporations that require additional experience in business plan & market development; sales leadership; and marketing / branding leadership. Since his 2012 relocation to Brazil, Ash Huzenlaub now assists US and UK based companies seeking these skill sets in their Brazilian growth initiatives. He also has tourism-specific experience as the creator of the Mexus Airlines, a concept developed in 2004 that sought to deliver cross border service between the U.S. and Mexico.

INSTRUMENTATION

As a human observer, I was the instrument for this qualitative research. Data were collected primarily through two standardized questionnaires—one for tourism students and professionals in the Serra Gaúcha, and one for tourism development and marketing professionals not based in the Serra Gaúcha. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted through the use of guiding questions pulled from the questionnaires in order to organize the conversation but not to limit dialogue nor to make the interviews more formal. It was important to the research that the natural flow of conversation not be interrupted and to let interview participants share with me what they thought was significant.

Students at the University of Caxias do Sul were introduced to the research in person and sent the questionnaire over email, through which they also responded. The anonymity of the student's identities was guaranteed. Therefore, all names of students that appear in this text are false and all identifying information has been excluded. The questionnaires answered by the students can be found in Appendix A.

Tourism professionals within the Serra Gaúcha were first contacted in the hopes of scheduling a time for a semi-structured interview and only given the questionnaire (see Appendix B) when schedules did not permit a meeting. All interviews in Brazil were conducted in person at the location of the interviewees choosing, in the interviewee's native language (Portuguese), and recorded on a digital recorder accessible only to the interviewer. Tourism development and marketing professionals not based in the Serra Gaúcha were given the choice of either questionnaire (see Appendix C) or semi-structured phone interview based on their preference. I served as the sole interviewer for all semi-structured interviews, both in person and over the phone.

PROCEDURE

My research was conducted in two phases: The first phase occurred during June and July 2012 throughout the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; and the second phase occurred between August 2012 to March 2013 in Austin, Texas. Prior to my departure for Brazil, I conducted a review of existing tourism-related literature pertaining to the country to ensure that this research would indeed contribute to the study of tourism rather than replicate existing data. It was through this research that I selected the Serra Gaúcha as my specific region of interest and subsequently began to research the history of tourism to the region and to the state of Rio Grande do Sul on the whole.

Through this process I began to understand the evolution of tourism in the area and developed some preliminary questions about the current state of tourism there, the attitudes surrounding tourism development in the region, and the goals for future tourism development.

I spent my first week in the Serra Gaúcha visiting primary tourist locations in the region (Caxias do Sul, Bento-Gonçalves, Gramado, Canela, and Cambara do Sul) as a tourist myself, a form of moderate participant observation, and continued to develop interview questions as well as formulate a list of key informants whom I hoped to interview. After this initial observation period, I organized a meeting with Dr. Marcia Maria Cappellano dos Santos, the program coordinator for the graduate program in tourism at the University of Caxias do Sul. After a discussion of my research, she permitted me to attend classes with other graduate students enrolled in the tourism program and put me in contact with some of the key informants I had mentioned wanting to interview, such as former Secretary of Tourism of Caxias do Sul, Jaison Barbosa.

Throughout the rest of my time in the Serra Gaúcha I predominantly alternated between attending graduate level tourism classes as a passive observer and contacting key informants who were on my list, as well as those I found through snowball sampling. In the classes I attended, I was able to make connections with some students interested in my research and asked them if they would be willing to fill out a questionnaire I had composed for them regarding tourism in the region. As previously mentioned, all tourism professionals in the Serra Gaúcha were initially contacted in the hopes of conducting a semi-structured interview, and the majority agreed. A questionnaire was provided instead only if time to conduct the interview could not be found prior to my departure from Brazil. Some sample questions from the questionnaire, which were also addressed in the semi-structured interview, include but were not limited to:

- 1) Você acha que a quantidade de turismo para a Serra Gaúcha aumentou ou diminuiu nos últimos anos? Se assim for, qual é, e por que você acha que o valor foi alterado nesta maneira?
- 2) Você acha que um aumento no turismo seria uma coisa boa para a Serra Gaúcha? Porque / por que não? Quais são alguns dos benefícios e / ou riscos associados com mais turismo?
- 3) Na sua opinião, qual é a coisa mais importante que as cidades da região da Serra Gaúcha pode fazer para atrair mais turistas internacionais? Qual é a coisa mais importante que eles podem fazer para atrair mais turistas brasileiros?

In my final week in the Serra Gaúcha, I returned to my role as a tourist and took a guided tour through the Caminhos da Colônia, Portuguese for "Pathways of the Colony", which is a scenic tourist route of four settlements in the Serra Gaúcha. The 35km route runs between the cities of Caxias do Sul, Flores da Cunha, Otávio Rocha and the old settlement of Santa Justina, which did not develop into a city like the other three.

The tour route passed through the wine country of Rio Grande do Sul, highlighting the cities colonized by Italian immigrants more than 100 years ago, and included visits of wineries, cathedrals, museums, old mills and the bucolic Italian region of the Serra Gaúcha. Additionally, I returned to Cambara do Sul, where I stayed for a night in the Parador Casa da Montanha eco-village, and took tours of the Parque Nacional da Serra Geral, where the well-known canyons of Itaimbezinho, Fortaleza, Churriado and Malacara are located.

Upon my return to the United States, I began the second phase of my research by organizing my collected data and developing new questions, based on my preliminary findings, for key travel leaders in the worldwide tourism industry. As with the professionals I contacted in the Serra Gaúcha, these key informants were also given the

option of either completing a questionnaire or speaking with me in a semi-structured interview (the primary difference being that geographical location often necessitated these interviews be conducted over the phone instead of in person). I also took this time to collect and analyze primary documents produced by Brazil's Ministry of Tourism, such as the national tourism plans, as well as documents produced by the state of Rio Grande do Sul regarding tourism marketing and development such as the Plano de Marketing do Turismo do Rio Grande do Sul 2012-2015. Through my analysis, I determined areas of consistency and inconsistency between state and federal goals for tourism development in the region and the current state of tourism as observed by me and described by my key informants in the region.

Through the utilization of fundamental qualitative research methods—including my collection of data from the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with tourism students and professionals both in and out of the Serra Gaúcha, observations as a participant, and analysis of published tourism development and marketing materials from both the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, as well as from the state of Rio Grande do Sul—I feel I have developed an informed perspective on the current state of tourism within the Serra Gaúcha region, as well as a foundation upon which to put forth some specific recommendations on how to increase tourism in accordance with the goals set forth by both the state and nation.

ETHICAL CONCERNS

The Institutional Review Board at the University of Texas at Austin approved research protocol before research commenced. The study was deemed to be one of minimal risk to participants and the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort

anticipated in the research was not greater than any ordinarily encountered in daily life. However, as this study required the participation of human respondents, certain ethical issues were addressed. Among the significant ethical issues that were considered in the research process include consent and confidentiality. In order to secure the consent of the selected participants, the researcher relayed all important details of the study, including its aim and purpose. By explaining these significant details, the respondents were able to understand the importance of their role in the completion of the research. The respondents were also advised that they could withdraw from the study even during the process. With this, the participants were not forced to participate in the research. When requested (with the students from the University of Caxias do Sul), the confidentiality of participants was ensured by not disclosing their names or personal information in the research. Interviews conducted in person and over the phone were audio recorded in all cases that permission for recording was granted by the participant. These recordings were later transferred to a secure hard drive and deleted from the tape recorder.

CREDIBILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY

Due to the highly qualitative nature of data collection, I make no claims to the transferability, or external validity, of my research. Thus, the scope of my findings has an applicability limited to the time and location described, and reliable replication of this study would be dependent upon a sample of interviewees with similar backgrounds and experiences as my participants. This said, throughout this study I made every effort to insure credibility by collecting my data through a set of standards from which I deviated as little as possible. In this way I can say with confidence that I did not purposefully influence the internal validity of my research.

DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study was primarily delimited to participants involved academically or professionally with tourism within the year of data collection. Naturally, this selection suggests a pro-tourism bias in their responses as well as a pro-tourism bias of my own through the selection process. Regarding the study's limitations, the most definitive were time and financial resources. Because of work demands, I was only able to afford an approximately six-week stay in the Serra Gaúcha. In that time, I was lucky to be able to find many willing and appropriate interviewees, but I was unable to organize meetings with as many government officials as I would have liked.

I also encountered frustrations with limited access to trustworthy quantitative data about tourist rates to the Serra Gaúcha. To quote a respected professor in the graduate tourism program at the University of Caxias, Rafael José dos Santos: "I've asked [my assistant] to help me to find you some update documents including statistics about [the] Serra Gaúcha, but I'm afraid they are not very trusted because of methodological issues." (I never received even those documents.) I found myself in a similar situation with José Henrique, director of the airport in Caxias do Sul, who could provide me with very little quantitative data regarding the demographics of people traveling through the airport, both arrivals and departures. He maintains that in order for me to have found the data I was looking for, I would have had to find a way to speak with the director of the Department of Airports, which is housed under the Transportation Secretariat of the State of Rio Grande do Sul and located in the state's capital of Porto Alegre. Tracking down this information, which to my knowledge does not exist in any online database accessible to me, would take much more time and money than I had available for this master's thesis. If I were to pursue this research in a more longitudinal fashion, I believe that locating

more rich quantitative data regarding tourism statistics in the Serra Gaúcha would be valuable.

Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter I present the results of the interview and questionnaire portion of my research, in which I gathered current opinions and strategies from tourism academics and professionals—operating both within the Serra Gaúcha and internationally—regarding regional tourism development and marketing specific to the Serra Gaúcha. Because the data were collected using a mixture of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, the results cannot be arranged question-by-question, and are thus arranged topically addressing the major themes that surfaced in most, if not all, of the subjects' responses.

IS TOURISM BENEFICIAL TO DEVELOPING REGIONS LIKE THE SERRA GAÚCHA?

Despite their understanding of the accusations levied against tourism in developing countries, each respondent expressed his or her support for the increase of tourism to the Serra Gaúcha. Though he acknowledged that tourism must be developed and managed carefully, Costas Christ cited his conviction that the industry is less damaging and provides more sustainable long-term economic benefits than other industries to which municipalities may turn for economic development, such as short-term extractive industries like logging old growth forests or mining.

In and of itself, tourism can be an opportunity or a threat. The difference is in how it is planned and managed. Tourism relies on the “health” of the destination—visitors will not come if the natural attractions they want to see are damaged, polluted, or destroyed, and if cultural heritage has fallen prey to mass-market globalization. Tourism done right can provide long-term benefits to local people in the form of employment both directly in the tourism sector and in supporting other economic linkages, while

supporting the protection of natural and cultural heritage that might otherwise be destroyed for short-term economic gain from more environmentally damaging industries like mining and timber clear cutting. (Costas Christ, personal communication, April 1, 2013)

Rafael dos Santos, professor of tourism studies at the University of Caxias do Sul, highlighted the role of tourism in the Serra Gaúcha more specifically through his description of its role in Bento Gonçalves where it compliments and works in conjunction with the private vineyards and increases sales of wine and wine products. Furthermore, he noted that the economies of Gramado and Canela are based in tourism, so it is only natural that they should want to increase tourism to the region as much as possible (Rafael dos Santos, personal communication, March 31, 2013). These sentiments were echoed by graduate student of tourism Fernando Verza who argued that increased tourism in the Serra Gaúcha:

dinamizaria a base produtiva e traria novos empregos no setor de serviços, visto que o mercado de mão-de-obra local se volta à indústria, o que viria a complementar o que vem sendo produzido aqui. Além disso, o turismo poderia impulsionar as opções culturais, de lazer e entretenimento e proporcionar a preservação do patrimônio material e imaterial e possíveis requalificações urbana. (Fernando Verza, personal communication, August 13, 2012)

Overall the respondents felt that increased tourism in the Serra Gaúcha would be positive—assisting, rather than endangering, the protection of natural and cultural heritage and, in so doing, benefitting local people.

DO MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN THE SERRA GAÚCHA WANT TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS?

Though all of the respondents and interviewees agreed that tourism is beneficial to the municipalities within the Serra Gaúcha, an important follow-up to the discussion of the benefits of tourism was whether or not the municipalities were actively interested in attracting more tourists. This specific discussion was limited to those actually living in the region, such as Secretary of Tourism of Gramado Rosa Helena Volk, who said:

Gramado vive do turismo. Cidade cheia é sinal de cidade satisfeita! Gramado, por ocupar um pequeno território na Serra Gaúcha, por vezes passa por momentos de superlotação, principalmente na área central da cidade, mas nada que faça o turista desistir de seu roteiro turístico. A comunidade cede a cidade ao turista, pois entende que toda esta beleza não pode ser guardada apenas aqueles que aqui residem, mas sim compartilhada com o mundo. (Rosa Helena Volk, personal communication, July 19, 2012)

The Secretary of Tourism for Bento Gonçalves Lúcia Conci also acknowledged her city's desire for more tourists, but said that their primary concern currently with respect to tourism is increasing the duration of the stay (Lúcia Conci, personal communication, June 27, 2012).

Of the subjects who lived in the Serra Gaúcha at the time of data collection, only the director of the Hugo Cantergiani Regional Airport in Caxias, José Henrique, expressed a dissenting voice. Though he did not express antipathy towards tourism nor assert that the city of Caxias was opposed to an influx of tourists, Henrique claimed that “Caxias acha que ele não precisa de turismo.” He followed with a description of Caxias as the industrial hub of the Serra Gaúcha, priding itself on its industry and focusing its energy on development policies that benefit industry rather than tourism development. “Caxias é uma cidade de negócios,” he concluded. That said, Carlos Heinen, President of

the Chamber of Industry, Commerce and Services of Caxias do Sul, did concede that tourism should not be viewed as completely irrelevant to business in the city, as many businessmen and women arrive in Caxias do Sul daily needing transportation, accommodation, and the like. Furthermore, as Caxias do Sul hosts one of the largest festivals in the nation biannually, the Festa da Uva, it cannot afford to neglect the economic value of tourism to the city.

**ON WHICH DEMOGRAPHICS SHOULD THE MUNICIPALITIES FOCUS THEIR MARKETING:
DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL?**

Aside from the more general discussions about the benefits of tourism to developing regions such as the Serra Gaúcha and the desire for the municipalities within the region to develop tourism, another theme that arose in the questionnaires and interviews was that of domestic vs. international with respect to marketing focus. Though there is undeniable value in attracting both types of tourists, the consensus among tourism professionals was that a focus on attraction international tourists is the most wise in the case of a developing region like the Serra Gaúcha. Courtney Sculley (Account Manager for the International, West Coast, and Midwest markets at the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau) described the general logic behind this focus:

It's easier to start domestically when the country is established. However, an underdeveloped [sic] country often requires international travelers to make an impact. Domestic tourists keep money within the respective country, whereas international travelers bring in new, otherwise untapped capital to the visited country. Federal tourism boards focus on the international travelers in order to capitalize on these business opportunities. They cater to these markets by offering tax reimbursements for international travelers and passing legislation to grant easy visa access for entry. (Courtney Sculley, personal communication, March 7, 2013)

Ash Ryan Huzenlaub (travel entrepreneur and founder of Mexus Airlines) reaffirmed Courtney's sentiments, albeit in a more frank manner: "Marketing to domestic tourists is overrated in my opinion. Funds should be spent on luring foreigners. They will spend more" (Ash Ryan Huzenlaub, personal communication, March 17, 2013).

Current Brazilian tourism statistics support the need for tourism destinations to pursue international tourists over domestic. Brazil had about 55.1 million tourists in 2010, only 5.1 million of whom were foreigners. As Ash pointed out, foreigners are the tourists who spend the most—R\$ 2,044 on average, in comparison to the only R\$1,203 on average spent by the average Brazilian. In relation to other BRICS countries, international tourists spend in South Africa double what they do in Brazil, three times in Russia, and 13 times more in China. Moreover, despite the obvious benefits that have resulted in Brazil from the increasing average income, the economic rise for many Brazilians has meant the ability to travel abroad rather than within Brazil. According to a study by the Confederação Nacional de Serviços (CNS), in the period of 2004-2010 foreigner's expenditure in Brazil grew only 84% in comparison to the 471% increase in expenses of Brazilians abroad. Foreign tourists brought about U.S. \$5.8 billion to Brazil, while the United States gained \$166 billion in tourism revenue, followed by China (\$81 billion), Spain (\$70 billion), and France (\$68 billion). Other countries appearing ahead of Brazil are Thailand (\$22 billion), Mexico (\$15 billion), and Portugal (\$14 billion) (Vodopives 2012).

WHAT MAKES THE SERRA GAÚCHA A DISTINCTIVE REGION? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD IT MARKET TO TOURISTS?

When asked about the distinctiveness of the Serra Gaúcha in comparison with the rest of the country that would make the area attractive to tourists, each of the respondents living in the region praised their home:

Gramado tem tudo aquilo que o turista procura: tranquilidade, ar puro, boa mesa, belas paisagens, arquitetura marcada, excelente receptividade, atrativos diversos e, também, badalação. Estes são atributos que caracterizam toda a Serra Gaúcha, tornando-a um destino turístico de destaque. (Rosa Helena Volk, personal communication, July 19, 2012)

There were a few traits, however, that were the most often highlighted. For example, the most well known unique characteristic of the Serra Gaúcha is the mountainous geography and nationally uncharacteristic cold weather. As mentioned previously, cities like Gramado actually market the cold weather as an attractive feature to Brazilians who find the potential for snow enticing.



Figure 9: Snow in Gramado, circa 1994 (Skyscrapercity*Forums, 2007)

Another distinctive characteristic of the Serra Gaúcha frequently mentioned by respondents was the quality of infrastructure in comparison with the rest of Brazil. University of Caxias Masters in Tourism candidate Fernando Verza described the infrastructural appeal of the region in the following way:

A região turística da Serra Gaúcha (sobressaindo-se Gramado e Bento Gonçalves) tem uma capacidade de investimento, empreendedorismo, inovação e perseverança bastante notável, sobretudo em nível de Rio Grande do Sul.... A acessibilidade aérea por Porto Alegre vem a ser uma facilidade a mais.... A diversidade de atrações e a infraestrutura turística de vanguarda também são

fatores a serem considerados. (Fernando Verza, personal communication, August 13, 2012)

The most commonly discussed trait of the Serra Gaúcha, however, was the pervasive and enduring effects of Italian and German immigration. In the words of tourism agency director Jacson Antonio Papi, the most important thing that makes the region distinct is “a cultura e as tradições européias” (personal communication, August 31, 2012). Master’s of Tourism student Marina Oselame described the perception of these “culturas oriundas da imigração alemã e italiana” as a “valorização”—something residents of the Serra Gaúcha take seriously and pride themselves on. In fact, many residents of Italian decent make the effort to research the specifics of their genealogy in order to claim dual citizenship as both Italian and Brazilian. “Sem dúvida alguma,” said Rafael dos Santos, while discussing what makes the region distinctive, “é a influência decisiva das chamadas ‘cultura de imigração,’ com ênfase na alemã e na italiana (do Vêneto). Isso trouxe para a Serra manifestações culturais que hoje estão na maior parte dos atrativos oferecidos” (personal communication, March 31, 2013).

When asked to give specific examples of the enduring marks left on the region by immigration, respondents cited the existence of the wine production industry in and around Bento Gonçalves known as the Vale dos Vinhedos (Valley of the Vineyards). They also addressed the uniqueness of the traditional food preferred throughout the region, which highlights classic German and Italian dishes brought to Brazil by the immigrant population and is quite different from the typical plates found in Rio de Janeiro.

According to David Morris, founder and director of David Morris International, this puts the Serra Gaúcha in an excellent marketing position: “Wine and Food are the

hottest tourism draws right now. Regions that have these specific attractions should absolutely market them to stay on trend,” (personal communication, March 11, 2013). He felt that a region with such a strong immigrant culture adds special appeal to tourists who are interested in food and wine specifically, as well as those who want to experience diversity that the country has to offer.

WHAT ARE THE NECESSARY AREAS ON WHICH MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE SERRA GAÚCHA NEED TO FOCUS IN ORDER TO ATTRACT INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS?

Having established that the region does have desirable tourism characteristics to market, the following section is a collection of findings regarding pragmatic marketing suggestions on which the municipal tourism boards, as well as private tourism agencies, can focus in order to attract and impress new tourists to the Serra Gaúcha. It is divided between short- and long-term suggestions.

Short term: Public Relations/Web presence

The tourism industry professionals based in the United States spoke about the Serra Gaúcha as if they were advising the region like they would a client. David Morris and Melanie Brandman were the most vocal in recommending that the first, and most important, thing that destinations within the Serra Gaúcha do is to increase their involvement with public relations.

The thing I think relatively unknown regions like this [the Serra Gaúcha] desperately need is PR awareness, which is the least expensive thing they can do. Hiring and maintaining a good PR representative is not all that expensive, and having someone who can really promote the destination will garner a lot of awareness in a very cost-effective way. These destinations are simply not going to get the kind of media attention on their own that they can through a PR firm that will give them that access. Furthermore, getting the press to physically experience

these destinations is the most critically important thing you can do. Particularly with the Olympics coming, if you've got press on this area and people writing about what there is to do there, it will have a huge effect in a very short period of time. (David Morris, personal communication, March 11, 2013)

Echoing David's thoughts on the importance of developing public awareness, Melanie Brandman said:

Secondary cities like those in the Serra Gaúcha need to work on ways to highlight their value. In the short run, perhaps they could develop a PR/Marketing campaign that portrays them as sort of an add-on destination for those coming to Brazil for the upcoming World Cup. I would recommend that they utilize professional services that have extensive experience in marketing destinations from a media marketing and sales perspective. A professional PR firm like this will help drive awareness, press coverage, and brand recognition, as well as to help them identify important sales aspects. For example, they could help the local tourism boards to work with key tour operators and the key travel agents to create and promote new tourism packages. They have to get creative to develop some sort of experiential or value-driven option to get people to come and visit them. You have to give people reasons to come visit you. (Personal communication, March 13, 2013)

As part of the development of the Serra Gaúcha's public presence, Melanie also insisted that, in the digital age, the quickest tactic to market and spread the word about a destination is to actively get involved in the online space.

The Serra Gaúcha absolutely must fix their websites, which are dreadful currently, and create simple, clean pages—with viewing options in 3 languages—full of photos to demonstrate to potential tourists that the region actually is a place they should want to visit. For immediacy, online is the way to go. (Melanie Brandman, personal communication, March 13, 2013)

The rationale behind making a quick and assertive marketing move such as developing a strong online presence is that the World Cup is only a year away and few other marketing tactics will be able to be created and implemented in such a short amount of time. That said, because Brazil is about to be so internationally newsworthy, Melanie also said she felt it should be relatively easy for destinations in the Serra Gaúcha to get some attention in travel publications once they start to spotlight Brazil in relation to the World Cup. While purchasing advertisements will likely be out of the budget for tourism boards in the region, it is reasonable for destinations to push for attention in the editorial content. Additionally, Melanie suggested that tourist destinations in the region look into ways of promoting themselves on travel booking sites and develop promotional hooks geared toward the impending flood of international tourists—something that conveys the idea to tourists that, before or after the chaos of last game, they should seek rest and refuge in the unique beauty of the Serra Gaúcha.

Long term: Travel Infrastructure

Looking beyond the spotlight of the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, the most common suggestion for long-term development of the tourism industry in the Serra Gaúcha was to focus on infrastructural improvements expected by international tourists. The 2007-2010 National Tourism Plan published by the Ministry of Tourism in Brazil acknowledged the fact that infrastructural limitations were a major challenge to the growth of tourism in the country (National Tourism Plan 2007-2010, p.40), a fact not lost on the respondents who stressed the need for increased ease of transportation to the region—namely via airplane—if the region hopes to increase its appeal to international tourists.

For internationals: Infrastructure is key, especially with regards to arriving at their final destination. Nobody will want to take 2 connecting flights after arriving in São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. They will fly from their home to São Paulo, and from São Paulo to their final destination. Mendoza, Argentina, for example, increased their international arrivals with the building of a new airport, and the region is now a booming wine country. But if you do not have the flights, it will be difficult to get internationals to come.

José Henrique, director of the only airport in the Serra Gaúcha, which is located in Caxias do Sul, recognizes that the quality of his airport is a major problem. The Hugo Cantergiani Regional Airport is very small and located in the middle of the city, which makes it much more difficult for pilots to locate. Furthermore, the landing strip is quite short, giving little room for error—especially as the windy weather common to the Serra Gaúcha already poses an extra challenge.

Muitas pessoas não vêm pelo aeroporto de Caxias, a fim de viajar por toda a Serra Gaúcha, porque é tão incerto e instável. Este aeroporto não pode atender a demanda. (José Henrique, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

While there are plans to build a new airport in Caxias, it is not projected to be finished for at least five years, if not more. Nonetheless, José said he was hopeful that the airport would double air traffic to the region, as the projections have suggested, and bring many more tourists to the area. Currently, international tourists arrive to the Serra Gaúcha via flights to Porto Alegre where they must then either rent a car or get on a bus to take them to the major destinations with the region—a commute that averages between an hour and a half and two hours. According to José Henrique, the bus system is a good

substitute for unreliable flights in the short run, but he does recognize the importance for internationals to be able to arrive as close as possible to their intended destination.

SHOULD THE CITIES IN THE SERRA GAÚCHA WORK TOGETHER?

Of all the topics that arose during the interviews or questionnaires, none was more universal as the insistence that the municipalities throughout the Serra Gaúcha should work together and pool some of their budgets if they hope to accomplish any of the other suggestions in an effective manner. Unfortunately, despite the theoretical agreement on this issue, there continues to be some resistance to the practical enforcement of the development of regional communication in order to present a united marketing front.

Os municípios da Serra Gaúcha podem e devem trabalhar juntos. O governo federal incentiva isso, por exemplo, através da ideia de destinos indutores. Contudo, há sempre a dificuldade de integração, principalmente por rivalidades e, às vezes, diferenças entre os partidos políticos que estão nas prefeituras. Persiste, contudo, a dificuldade de compreensão, pelos governos locais, da importância da criação de políticas regionais. Os municípios pensam muito neles mesmos. (Rafael dos Santos, personal communication, March 31, 2013)

Here Rafael makes the claim that the municipalities throughout the region fail to see the importance of creating regional policies and they cannot see past themselves, despite the fact that the federal government's purpose in identifying and assisting the continued development of the "destinos indutores" (i.e. Gramado and Bento Gonçalves) was for those municipalities to pull up the rest of the region along with them. Jacson Antonio Papi spoke of these frustrations as well:

Infelizmente ainda se trabalha separadamente na região. A Gramado possui todo o marketing turístico a seu favor, Bento Gonçalves começa a se apresentar também como destino e Caxias ainda precisa muito para se tornar destino. Mas temos projetos [para] aproximar os laços, apesar de ainda ser difícil esta integração. (Jackson Antonio Papi, personal communication, August 31, 2012)

Interestingly, both the current secretaries of tourism of Bento Gonçalves and Gramado offered some agreement that the municipalities should work together, but more in the sense that they felt their personal improvements were a benefit to others with whom they “shared” their tourists.

Cada cidade da Serra Gaúcha possui *suas características distintas*, seus eventos, seus pontos turísticos e costumes. Este mix une as cidades da Região das Hortênsias oferecendo ao turista um roteiro completo. Por esta razão, diversas ações são pensadas em conjunto para fortalecer ainda mais a região em um todo. Desta forma, acreditamos que todas as cidades que compõem a *Região das Hortênsias*—Gramado, Nova Petrópolis, Canela, Picada Café e São Francisco—saíam ganhando. Um belo exemplo é a divulgação em conjunto da Rota Romântica, *fortalecendo os laços entre as cinco cidades da Região das Hortênsias*, as quais fazem parte deste roteiro [emphasis mine]. (Secretary of Tourism of Gramado Rosa Helena Volk, personal communication, July 19, 2012.)

Here Rosa talks about the importance of developing ties within the “Região das Hortênsias” despite the fact that she was asked about the Serra Gaúcha as a whole. The region about which she is speaking is predominantly composed of Gramado, which is by far the primary attraction, surrounded by the much, much smaller complimentary destinations of Nova Petrópolis, Canela, Picada Café, and São Francisco. Lúcia Conci, Secretary of Tourism of Bento Gonçalves, similarly hedged in her response, though she focused more on the benevolence of Gramado and Bento Gonçalves as the “destinos indutores”:

Devemos trabalhar juntos, porque os turistas vêm de uma região, e não um município. Os turistas vêm e circulam em torno da região pelas coisas que lhes interessam. Se cada município aumenta a qualidade do seu produto turístico, é para o benefício do resto de nós. Principalmente, essa ideia se aplica a Gramado e Bento Gonçalves como somos os dois destinos indutores. Nós compartilhamos o afluxo turístico porque os turistas não ficam sempre no mesmo lugar. (Secretary of Tourism of Bento Gonçalves Lúcia Conci, personal communication, June 27, 2012)

The former secretary of tourism of Caxias do Sul, Jaison Barbosa, offered comparable logic:

Trabalhar juntos? Sim e não. Porque os turistas não estão preocupados com os limites da cidade. Mas eu acho que é importante que cada município se concentrar no que sabem fazer melhor, e o que eles têm para oferecer. (Jaison Barbosa, personal communication, June 19, 2012)

In essence, Rosa, Lúcia, and Jaison expressed support for the concept of regional unity, but seem resistant to the idea of actually communicating with the other municipalities throughout the Serra Gaúcha in order to unify their approach to tourism development. This approach, according to Melanie Brandman, is counterproductive.

It's going to be a struggle for them to get out of their own way, but if there is a cohesive region, then going in on [tourism marketing and development] together is a great idea. Look at Napa or Sonoma—places that have branded themselves as the sum of their parts. Within the region, yes, they all have their unique stories to tell, but that's part of the larger story as well. From the marketing standpoint, you must first present the region before separating it out. The Serra Gaúcha should prepare marketing materials that first describe the region, and then break down the destinations in relation to each other so tourists can understand. It's fine to push your own little area, but destinations are going to do that anyway. If you can be part of a bigger message, an umbrella, then it will help you in the long run, particularly with the international markets. If you're a small player, you cannot

get that reach unless you have someone else helping you. (personal communication, March 13, 2013)

Melanie went on to explain the financial benefit to a regional approach: having each municipality invest a portion of its tourism budget into a community pool to market the cluster of destinations so they can maximize their reach. David Morris also described this advantage:

These smaller cities are going to have to invest wisely in themselves, and my feeling is that effective tourism marketing is really controlled regionally. The thing to do is to get the Secretaries of Tourism from the municipalities around the Serra Gaúcha together to discuss how to market the region as a whole. They all have budgets, probably not much, but even if they pooled just five or six cities, for example, they would have enough money to have a pretty good impact. Convince them to all start talking to each other, form a budget, and start with PR. (David Morris, personal communication, March 11, 2013)

By focusing on themselves as separate attractions rather than a consolidated region, the municipalities are not only dividing the attention of tourists but also not taking full advantage of what a pooled budget could provide.

SUMMARY

"If you want to travel fast, travel alone. If you want to travel far, travel together."

-(N'gambai African Proverb).

All of the themes addressed above can be tied into the final, and most critical finding: When it comes to increasing tourism, the region of the Serra Gaúcha must learn to function as just that—a region. Admittedly, decentralization is the federally sanctioned approach for tourism development, but it seems that the municipalities throughout the

Serra Gaúcha have taken the concept of decentralization a step too far, preferring to handle tourism themselves rather than working closely with the other municipalities in their region. The secretaries of tourism in Bento Gonçalves and Gramado both spoke of “sharing” tourists that they attract themselves, rather than seeing the value in forming and behaving as a cohesive unit with the surrounding municipalities throughout the region. Working as a unified cluster of destinations, however, would facilitate the ease with which the municipalities implement the other recommendations discussed in this chapter: public relations outreach, infrastructural development, etc. In the next chapter, I will relate these results to the theoretical concept of “tourism clusters,” present my overall conclusions and recommendations for the Serra Gaúcha, and propose questions for further research.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

I have followed the concepts of the tourism studies and management in Brazil from its historical and policy bases in Chapter Two to its practical implications for tourism development in regions such as the Serra Gaúcha in Chapter Four. In the latter chapter, I presented tourism development and marketing as perceived and practiced by both those who study tourism in an academic setting, as well as those who are involved in tourism professionally. Chapter Four consolidated and presented the main areas of significance for the questionnaire and interview subjects with regards to tourism in the Serra Gaúcha, as well as some corresponding suggestions for efficiently and successfully marketing the region to international tourists.

Though six thematic results were discussed in Chapter Four, the final presented finding should be understood as the unifying conclusion of this project: Municipalities throughout the Serra Gaúcha will be able to more successfully develop their tourism industry by working collectively rather than separately—developing what I refer to in the end of the chapter as a “tourism cluster.” The concept of tourism clusters is relatively new, though the general idea of industrial clusters has its origins in Harvard professor Michael E. Porter’s studies, which he applied primarily to the manufacturing industry. A generic definition of an industrial cluster is this: “a group of companies, business organizations or not, for whom membership within the group is an important element of each member of the company’s competitiveness” (Estevão and Ferreira 2009). Porter (2002) states that the clusters are synonymous with competitiveness because they contribute positively to innovative processes and facilitate relations with complimentary institutions—better enabling the consumer needs and channeling knowledge and information need toward technology development. A famous example of an industrial

cluster is Silicon Valley in California, where thousands of intertwined high tech companies linked by commonalities and complementarities are geographically concentrated in such a way that has resulted in increased innovation, development, specialization, and competition (Nordin 2003).

The discussion of clusters as they relate to the tourism industry is still in an embryonic phase (Estevão and Ferreira 2009), but given the understanding that clusters increase the competitiveness of a regional industry (Porter, 2002) and given that tourism is widely viewed, as I presented in Chapter Two, as an economic growth engine with particular focus at regional level, it is relevant (and I believe crucial in the case of the Serra Gaúcha) to discuss the role of clusters in tourism. Because the product of the tourism industry interacts directly with local bases, the application of the cluster concept to the tourism industry is extremely appropriate to the promotion of joint actions of inter-related companies (Jackson and Murphy, 2002).

Fittingly, Mario Carlos Beni, Brazilian academic and professor at the University of São Paulo, is one of the leading defenders of the tourism cluster, and defines the concept as:

as a set of attractions with touristic differential, concentrated in a limited geographical area with facilities and services of quality, collective efficiency, social and policy cohesion, with coordination of the production chain and of the cultural associations, and with excellent management of companies' networks that generate comparative and competitive advantages (2003).

The tourism cluster is a geographic concentration of companies and institutions interconnected in tourism activities, including suppliers, services, governments, institutions, universities, and competitors (Capone, 2004). In the words of Ferreira

(2003), “a touristic destination is the comprehensive conjunction of several strategies that cross the tourism cluster.” In other words, a tourism cluster is associated with a touristic product and a touristic destination.

I believe that the municipalities across the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil should mobilize to form a tourism cluster. None of the tourism professionals, students, or secretaries of tourism I spoke to mentioned any formalized organization between municipalities, suggesting the concept was largely confined to academic discussion rather than practical implementation. It is possible, of course, that there is more interaction between the municipalities than was revealed to me, but I found little evidence of an active attempt to stimulate any noticeable consolidation throughout the region. Regardless of the reasons for the continued fragmentation of the tourism market in the Serra Gaúcha, the lack of mobilization of such a project is to the detriment of tourism development throughout the region. Tourists dissatisfied by a specific any product/service/experience tend to undermine their whole image of a tourist destination, which is to say that the degree of satisfaction of the tourist experience is directly linked to performance of the cluster (Thomazi 2006).

It is my belief, based on the findings of my research, that the future competitiveness of the Serra Gaúcha, particularly with respect to its appeal to international tourists, is largely dependent upon its willingness to function as a cluster—marketing itself as a unified region rather than a related collection of individual municipalities. Out of all of the subjects in this study, each and every respondent freely stated that they believed the municipalities should actively work together to increase tourism development in the region. Understandably—though perhaps a primary cause for the continued lack of regional organization in spite of such widespread support for the idea—it was only the secretaries of tourism who hedged their support for regional unity,

as each seemed to preference their own municipality's role in attracting tourists rather than viewing it as an equal partner sharing a common goal with the rest of the destinations throughout the region. However, if the tourism boards and secretaries are able to see past their own borders to appreciate the value in presenting a unified front to tourists, the Serra Gaúcha should experience a noticeable increase in both the number and duration of tourist stays in the coming years. This value lies in the ability of the municipalities to more effectively and affordably respond to the other results and suggestions presented in Chapter Four, such as building PR awareness on an international scale, mobilizing the enduring legacies of the cultural history of region to advantage of the current popularity of food and wine tourism, and expediting the development of necessary infrastructural improvements like the building of a newer, larger, and more reliable regional airport.

Although this research has satisfied the three objectives I initially set out to accomplish, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, because of the limited time available to me during my field research in Brazil, the sample size of subjects who were either interviewed or filled out a questionnaire was naturally restricted. The sample was also limited to those with an affiliation with tourism, either academically or professionally, suggesting the potential for a bias toward the continuation and proliferation of tourism. Finally, though this research was designed to be largely qualitative, access to reliable, detailed quantitative data regarding the amount of tourists to the Serra Gaúcha over time, as well as the demographic breakdown of these tourists, proved incredibly difficult and ultimately inhibited my ability to evaluate certain aspects of current tourism trends in the area.

Despite the significant progress in tourism policy formulation and planning Brazil has made in the past decade since the creation of the Ministry of Tourism and the

development of the first formal national tourism plan, Brazil still faces many challenges regarding implementation at the regional and local level. Municipal governments must become effective partners in the management and development of their own tourism markets, but it is not feasible for the Brazilian federal government to pay personalized attention to each municipality, as evidenced by the decentralized management policies that have been in place since 2004. This project sought to bridge the gap between federal goals for tourism development and the personalized attention municipalities need to formulate plans tailored to their specific strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, there is a substantial gap in Brazilian tourism research of practical, applicable studies that seek to understand the needs and wants of specific tourist destinations in order to assist, rather than complicate, inhibit, or problematize, the development of the tourism market there.

Because this project can only claim applicability to the Serra Gaúcha, similar studies should be undertaken in other developing tourist regions throughout Brazil in order to assist in the accomplishment of the federal government's goal to disperse the concentration of tourism from the coast through the rest of the country. A logical extension of this particular project would be the launch of an inter-municipal task force in charge of spearheading the formation of the cluster and conducting the necessary research to answer questions such as: What are the specific short- and long-term goals for tourism growth in the Serra Gaúcha as a region? What percentage of each municipality's tourism budget should go towards the function of the cluster? What infrastructural improvements should be prioritized regionally, and what should be left to the municipalities to decide on their own? How can the Serra Gaúcha cluster mobilize to most effectively attract international tourists before, during, and after the World Cup and Olympics? Specific questions like these, and countless more, will need to be answered in order for a Serra Gaúcha cluster to become more than just an idea.

The Brazilian Ministry of Tourism recently created an international tourism marketing plan called the “Plano Aquarela 2020” that set new goals Brazil intends to achieve by 2020. In the introduction, the former President of Embratur Jeanine Pires, citing Brazil’s role as host to the upcoming World Cup and Summer Olympics, says:

We will have the great chance to show to world, a still unknown nation in all its diversity for the billions of people who will see these events on TV, Internet, newspapers, and magazines. These spectators will not only see the competitions, but also be exposed to the culture, the Brazilian way of life, the most important touristic attractions, full of various landscapes... Brazil will have plenty of time before, during and after the World Cup and the Olympic Games to promote all its diversity, its capacity to host great events, [and] its new economic and political position to the world. (Aquarela Plan 2020, p.5)

Former Minister of Tourism Luiz Barretto also expresses his hopes that Brazil take advantage of the coming opportunity to impress the world with its “modernization,” “ability to host great events” and “natural and cultural beauties,” so that the country can become a major tourist destination of the world by 2020 (Aquarela Plan 2020, p.4). Both Barretto and Pires understand that the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics have set the stage for Brazil to attract an unprecedented amount foreign interest of which the country must take advantage. The eyes of the world are beginning to fix themselves upon Brazil, providing the country with a unique and powerful chance to show the international community the kind of diversity it has to offer tourists. Through the successful development and marketing of tourist regions like the Serra Gaúcha, Brazil can soon be celebrated as more than simply a container for Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Like the Serra Gaúcha, Brazil will soon be known as the sum of its constituent parts.

Appendix A: Questionnaire for students at the University of Caxias do Sul

- 1) Você acha que a quantidade de turismo para sua cidade aumentou ou diminuiu nos últimos anos? Se assim for, qual é, e por que você acha que o valor foi alterado nesta maneira?
- 2) Você acha que um aumento no turismo seria uma coisa boa para a sua cidade? Porque / por que não? Quais são alguns dos benefícios e / ou riscos associados com mais turismo para a sua cidade?
- 3) Houve alguma mudança em sua cidade para atrair mais turistas? Você acha que o governo local está preocupado com aumento do turismo?
- 4) Existiram planos governamentais para aumentar o turismo para a sua cidade? Se sim, quais eram os planos e que tipo de mudanças para a cidade que eles tentam implementar?
- 5) O que você acha que faz a Serra Gaúcha distinta de outras regiões do Rio Grande do Sul e do Brasil?
- 6) Você acha que as cidades da Serra Gaúcha podem trabalhar juntos como um grupo para atrair mais turistas para a região?
- 7) Na sua opinião, qual é a coisa mais *fácil* que as cidades da região da Serra Gaúcha pode fazer para atrair mais turistas internacionais? Qual é a coisa mais *fácil* que eles podem fazer para atrair mais turistas brasileiros?
- 8) Na sua opinião, qual é a coisa mais *importante* que as cidades da região da Serra Gaúcha pode fazer para atrair mais turistas internacionais? Qual é a coisa mais *importante* que eles podem fazer para atrair mais turistas brasileiros?
- 9) Eu tenho ouvido muitas pessoas dizer que viajar no Brasil é muito caro e é por isso que muitas pessoas que podem dar ao luxo de viajar optar por ir para fora do país. Por que você acha que isso é, e você acha que alguma coisa poderia ser feito para tornar as cidades da Serra Gaúcha mais acessíveis?
- 10) O Brasil tem sido elogiado por continuar a melhorar economicamente, e o movimento ascendente das classes socioeconômicas também é muito impressionante. Uma estatística recente publicado diz que entre 2002 e 2010 a parte de classe média-baixa da indústria do turismo quase duplicou para 34%. Você acha que menores cidades brasileiras como Caxias deve encontrar maneiras de atrair esta nova demográfica dos turistas que agora está financeiramente capaz de explorar seu próprio país? Se sim, como você sugere essas cidades deveriam fazer isso?

Appendix B: Questionnaire for tourism professionals in Brazil

- 1) Você acha que a quantidade de turismo para a Serra Gaúcha aumentou ou diminuiu nos últimos anos? Se assim for, qual é, e por que você acha que o valor foi alterado nesta maneira?
- 2) Você acha que um aumento no turismo seria uma coisa boa para a Serra Gaúcha? Porque / por que não? Quais são alguns dos benefícios e / ou riscos associados com mais turismo?
- 3) Você acha que os cidadãos de seu município quer mais turistas?
- 4) Houve alguma mudança em para atrair mais turistas a região? Você acha que os governos locais estão preocupados com aumento do turismo?
- 5) Existiram planos governamentais para aumentar o turismo para a região? Se sim, quais eram os planos e que tipo de mudanças para a região que eles tentam implementar?
- 6) O que você acha que faz a Serra Gaúcha distinta de outras regiões do Rio Grande do Sul e do Brasil?
- 7) Você acha que as cidades da Serra Gaúcha podem trabalhar juntos como um grupo para atrair mais turistas para a região? Por que o por que não?
- 8) Na sua opinião, qual é a coisa mais *fácil* que as cidades da região da Serra Gaúcha pode fazer para atrair mais turistas internacionais? Qual é a coisa mais *fácil* que eles podem fazer para atrair mais turistas brasileiros?
- 9) Na sua opinião, qual é a coisa mais *importante* que as cidades da região da Serra Gaúcha pode fazer para atrair mais turistas internacionais? Qual é a coisa mais *importante* que eles podem fazer para atrair mais turistas brasileiros?
- 10) Eu tenho ouvido muitas pessoas dizer que viajar no Brasil é muito caro e é por isso que muitas pessoas que podem dar ao luxo de viajar optar por ir para fora do país. Por que você acha que isso é, e você acha que alguma coisa poderia ser feito para tornar as cidades da Serra Gaúcha mais acessíveis?
- 11) O Brasil tem sido elogiado por continuar a melhorar economicamente, e o movimento ascendente das classes socioeconômicas também é muito impressionante. Uma estatística recente publicado diz que entre 2002 e 2010 a parte de classe média-baixa da indústria do turismo quase duplicou para 34%. Você acha que menores cidades brasileiras como Caxias deve encontrar maneiras de atrair esta nova demográfica dos turistas que agora

está financeiramente capaz de explorar seu próprio país? Se sim, como você sugere essas cidades deveriam fazer isso?

Appendix C: Questionnaire for tourism professionals based outside of Brazil

- 1) What is your current profession/role/title? How long have you been involved in the tourism industry and in what capacity?
- 2) What, if any, do you feel is the value in increasing rates of tourism within a country?
- 3) In your experience, do you feel that national governments give priority (with regard to marketing and overall budget) to attracting international tourists to their country or to the development of domestic tourism within their own country? Could you please justify your answer with statistical evidence (or at least anecdotal evidence)?
- 4) Why do you feel countries behave in the way you answered above? Do you believe this is the wisest approach for tourism development within a country?
- 5) In your opinion, what are the differences in marketing strategies between attracting international tourists to a country and encouraging domestic tourism within a country? In other words, what are the different expectations between domestic tourists and international tourists and how do federal tourism boards cater to these desires?
- 6) If you were advising a secondary city in a developing nation that was interested in attracting domestic tourists, what are the top 3 things you would suggest they do? What are the top 3 things you would suggest they do to attract international tourists?
- 7) Do you feel the development of a tourism market in a city is more efficiently done at the local, state, or federal level? Why?
- 8) Many global organizations such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization and the International Monetary Fund have backed tourism as a means for poverty alleviation and economic growth, but the opposition to this argument claims that often tourism causes more damage than good, especially in developing nations. What is your take on this and why? Do you feel that tourism is a beneficial country development strategy?
- 9) Do you believe there are benefits to encouraging domestic tourism in developing nations that could mitigate some of the fears some have about the dangers of international tourism? Why or why not? What, if any, are some of the potential benefits of domestic tourism that cannot be attributed to international tourism?
- 10) Brazil has been experiencing a sizable growth in its lower middle class — a demographic that is becoming more financially able to travel for the first time. In your

professional opinion, would it be wise of secondary cities interested in expanding their tourism sector to market to these potential travelers? Why or why not?

11) Do you feel the money Brazil is currently investing in its preparations for the upcoming World Cup and Olympics will be economically beneficial after these events are over? In other words, do you believe their huge upfront investment in tourism development going to be “worth it” in the long run? Why or why not?

12) What can secondary cities in Brazil, which are interested in attracting more tourists, do to capitalize on the upcoming attention their country will receive during the FIFA World Cup (2014) and Summer Olympics (2016)? To whom should they market and why? How would you recommend they do so? (Please give some specific suggestions.)

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